

Literacy Demonstrations Accommodations

For

Adults with Learning Disabilities

Balancing Accommodation

With

Skills Integrity

Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario

www.LDAO.ca

Pat Hatt

Project Manager

2003

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the Reference Group

- **Alan Cherwinski**
Technical Projects Co-coordinator
AlphaPlus Center
- **Victoria Hatt**
Clerical Support
- **Sandra Latchford** Coordinator of Services to Students with Disabilities
Faculty of Education
University of New Brunswick
- **Susan Lefebvre**
Program Co-coordinator
Literacy for East Toronto
Toronto Catholic District School Board
- **Richard Massey**
Office and Technical Coordinator
Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (L.D.A.O.)
- **Tina Natal**
Adult Literacy Program Co-coordinator,
Toronto Public Library.
- **Marilyn Stack,**
Counselor, Literacy & Basic Skills
Academic Upgrading Dept. Access Centre of Excellence
- **Diane Wagner**
Resource & Adult Issues
Consultant, LDAO

And...The literary practitioners throughout the province for their advice and interest

In addition, I would like to thank the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities of Ontario and National Literacy Secretariat for their generous financial support and the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario for its ongoing support of this and other projects in the area of literacy and learning disabilities.

About the Author

Pat Hatt has worked in the field of education for over 30 years, the last 15 in Adult Literacy. Pat has an Ontario Teaching Certificate and a masters degree in Learning and Language problems. She has volunteered for the Learning Disabilities Association for over 20 years at the local, provincial and national levels, and has been on the boards of many different organizations, representing persons with disabilities. Pat has done extensive training of literacy practitioners around Ontario on how to accommodate learners with learning difficulties, and she has produced several manuals and guides.

Table Of Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Table Of Contents	3
What is a Learning Disability?	5
What is Dyslexia?	5
How do Learning Disabilities Affect Literacy Acquisition?	6
What is a Literacy Demonstration?	6
What does Skills “Integrity” Mean?	7
What is an “Appropriate Accommodation”?	7
Descriptions of Learning Disabilities and Other Associated Issues	9
Visual Processing Learning Disabilities	9
Auditory Processing Learning Disabilities	9
Organizational Learning Disabilities	9
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD, also called ADD)	10
Sample Accommodations	11
The Sample Accommodations	12
Visual Processing Demonstrations	13
Salina Level One	14
Ed Level Two	18
Vanessa Level Three	22
Naomi Level Four	26
Jeri Level Five	30
Auditory Processing Demonstrations	34
Cuthbert Level One	35
Bill Level Two	39
Ling Level Three	43
Osbert Level Four	47
Harry Level Five	51

Organizational Demonstrations	55
Jasmine Level One.....	56
Harold Level Two	60
Verity Level Three	64
Luk Level Four	68
Nellie Level Five	72
LDAO Definition of Learning Disabilities (2001)	76

What is a Learning Disability?

There are many useful definitions and descriptions of a learning disability. In the field of literacy however the simplest and the most useful way to explain it is to say that a person with a learning disability is a normal individual with an information processing disability. However one must first accept that a learning disability is not a weakness, not a lack of skills training, not caused by a lack of motivation and not an inappropriate curriculum or teachers but a real disability. As such these learners have the right to appropriate accommodation, and the Human Rights Code of Ontario and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Learning disabilities can affect the way in which a learner reads, comprehends, write, spells, speaks, calculates, **makes informal choices** or stores and retrieves information.

While there are numerous types or subsets of learning disabilities the ones that affect literacy can be organized into three main clusters.

1. Problems processing visual information
2. Problems processing auditory information
3. Problems organizing information for comprehension storage and retrieval.

In the sample demonstrations you will see examples of how these learning disabilities create barriers and how the effect of those barriers can be significantly reduced with accommodation.

At the end of this manual you will find the formal definition of a learning disability that is approved by the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario. You will also find information on their website and how to access their Adult Literacy site. On that website in addition to the definition you will find the series of articles put together for the 2000/2001 Practitioners Training Sessions as well as other useful information which will help you to better understand your learners who have learning disabilities.

What is Dyslexia?

You may have a learner who says they have been told they have dyslexia.

Dyslexia is a medical term to describe an individuals' inability to access and successfully decode written language. One could say Dyslexia is a "subtype" of the more generic term 'learning disability'.

Note: In Britain and Western Europe Dyslexia is used as the generic term for what we call Learning Disabilities and Learning Disabilities is the term they use for developmental or intellectual disabilities.

How do Learning Disabilities Affect Literacy Acquisition?

In order to make sense of written language the brain uses three main decoding strategies. One, it immediately recognizes a word and can make sense of it. Two, if it is unfamiliar with the word it breaks it down into sounds and on “hearing” the word recognizes it and makes sense of it. Third, sometimes the brain needs more information than the look or sound of a word. It then ‘reasons out’ the word, given the information gathered from other sources (pictures, context, root words set, etc).

If an individual has a learning disability that interferes with any one of these three areas they are significantly disadvantaged.

Sometimes this disadvantage is intensified by the use of a reading curriculum that puts more emphasis on one decoding skill than the other two.

Traditionally the education system swings like a pendulum through three main reading methods; sight, phonics and whole language.

Luckily in Adult Literacy we are able to select the method best suited to the learner, not to try to make the learner fit the curriculum.

Sometimes practitioners say that “My learner has equal problems in each area. What should I do?” If this is the case one should learn more about learners. However when all areas are weak there is a good chance the learner may have an intellectual disability not a learning disability. In that case it means a very different focus to your teaching for all learners deserve the program that is best suited to their needs and strengths.

What is a Literacy Demonstration?

A literacy demonstration is an opportunity for a learner to show that he or she is able to perform a skill or set of skills in terms of a personal, real-life situation. We know that skills practised in isolation don’t transfer to application. It is therefore preferable to practise those skills in a meaningful task. Each of the sample demonstrations are based on these three areas of interest to learners:

- employment
- further education or training
- personal growth and development

What does Skills “Integrity” Mean?

Skills ‘integrity’ relates to the need to ensure that even if we provide a learner with accommodations, the learner is independently able to use that skill and or to use it to learn a more complex skill. A skill lacks integrity when it does not allow a learner to do either of these two things. An instructor may believe that they can ‘accommodate’ a learner who can’t spell, by giving the learner the correct spelling or by correcting the learner’s work. This is not an appropriate accommodation since when the instructor is not present the learner is unable to produce a correctly spelled passage.

However, if the instructor teaches the learner how to use a hand held spell checker, or a computer spell checker, and ensures that the learner has sufficient knowledge of grammar, spelling rules, spelling tricks and other strategies to work out how a word is spelled, the learner is then independent. While the learner still has significant spelling problems they can produce independently a correctly spelled piece of work.

The integrity of the skill is then said to remain intact.

What is an “Appropriate Accommodation”?

Normally we don’t talk about ‘appropriate’ accommodations. In the world of disability issues and rights, the word ‘appropriate’ suggests that there may be a judgement to be made. Individuals have a right to accommodations. The issue of appropriate is not stressed.

However since we, in the field of literacy are just beginning to work out what are ‘good’ and ‘useful’ accommodations with our learners, we need to examine what is or is not appropriate. Usually in the Human Rights/Employment Equity world, the individual with a disability describes what accommodation they require. Our learners are often totally unaware or at least unable to articulate what works best for them. Together the learner and the practitioner need to discover what works best. Often a learner will reject the use of an accommodation. They believe that whatever you suggest is a “crutch” that it is cheating or that you are denying the learner the right to learn to do it the right way.

You might try to explain that when someone has a broken leg then a temporary crutch is a useful tool to help him or her get around. When their leg heals it is no longer needed. However if someone has lost their leg they use a crutch or a wheelchair to get around. Their leg will not get better and their wheelchair ensures they can move around and get on with their life. Their accommodation is like the wheelchair, something that enables them to get on with their life.

However some learners can’t relate to this example. You might remind them about individuals who can’t read without their glasses. They will agree that glasses are not “cheating” and the individual would never be told do their school work without their glasses. Glasses for someone with vision problems are an appropriate accommodation. Together the learner and the practitioner might find the appropriate accommodation that will allow the learner to be successful and move on with their life. There are several other issues to look at.

First, remember that the accommodations used in the demonstrations are just as familiar to them as the skills they are demonstrating. Finding the best way for the learners to perform a task is what accommodation is all about. Sometimes you may feel that it is just a strategy not an accommodation since at the level one and two level everything is fairly simple. Practitioners use teaching strategies to better teach their learners. They also teach learners strategies to help them learn better. (Using slash lines to break up a big word into syllables helps decode but as the learner gets better they can break it up in their head and quickly sound it out. Drawing lines is no longer efficient so they stop)

If a learner can do a task without the use of a strategy they will. But if they need it they will continue to use it. In the end, it is their need that will decide. To be an accommodation the answer to the following three questions must be yes.

YES NO

Does the accommodation make use of one of more of

- Support people
- Print material
- Technology
- Environmental modification

Does it allows the individual to both

- Use his strengths and minimize effect of disability
- Become independent in the use of the skill

Does it allow the individual to be more efficient and effective?

Descriptions of Learning Disabilities and Other Associated Issues

Following you will find the descriptions of three clusters of Learning Disabilities used in the samples, as well as a short list of the types of teaching strategies a practitioner may use with their learner for each cluster.

Visual Processing Learning Disabilities

Learners with visual processing learning disabilities:

- Can sound out words
- Can blend sounds
- Can substitute letters
- Can work with word families/ rhyming words
- Very verbal, will chat
- Can't recognize words that they "know"
- Reverse letters
- Have trouble with oral reading, stumble, hesitate
- Get lost and use finger to find spot
- Spell based on the sounds
- Have problems with irregular sounds (ough, eigh)

Auditory Processing Learning Disabilities

Learners with auditory processing learning disabilities:

- Can remember words they know
- Guess words that look like the word (ie. attraction or attractive)
- Have trouble with big words
- Say they have trouble with pronunciation
- Can't blend sounds well
- May know sounds but mixe them up when sounding out
- Doesn't respond to rhyming clues
- Spell based on known words

Organizational Learning Disabilities

Learners with an organizational learning disability will:

- Take longer to understand and respond to your questions, but the quality of the answer is good
- Have trouble giving clear, concise answers to simple questions
- Complain they have trouble focusing
- Need rewording of questions, but good answers
- Have trouble with attendance and follow through

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD, also called ADD)

ADHD is not in itself is a learning disability. However we know that between 60-80% of individuals with ADHD have learning disabilities as well. While not all individuals with organizational learning disabilities have ADHD enough do that it is wise to include them in this section because ADHD adds another component to this problem.

While ADHD is a psychiatric disability that is usually diagnosed and treated by a medical doctor, most professionals understand that these learners not only may need medical intervention such as medication, they also need their instruction and evaluation adjusted to accommodate the negative effects of their ADHD.

Most individuals respond to the reduction of extraneous stimulants, i.e. writing an exam in a quiet room or listening to music which creates a white noise and eliminates those external distracters. Some individuals can use specific strategies to help them focus. Some may require considerable training by a professional.

The vast majority of individuals with ADHD are of average or above intelligence. They want to learn but so much interferes. They become disheartened and quit if they do not meet with success. That is why the time they devote to learning must be productive and based in subject areas that they see as meaningful. They have a limited amount of energy and they don't want to waste learning things they see as useless. You often must "sell" them on learning skills they cannot see an immediate use for.

In the past it was believed that mostly males were affected by ADHD. We now know that females often have ADHD but in them it is seen as "daydreaming" rather than overt physical activities. Inability to focus or stay on task, or "daydreaming," is often a descriptor used by young women.

With help and good literacy skills, individuals with ADHD not only can reach their potential, but they often are the high achievers in our society, such as Charles Schwabb, a well-known financier.

Sample Accommodations

In the pages that follow you will find 60 samples accommodations to be used in demonstrations for learners with learning disabilities

Each Sample will contain

1. Learner Profile
 - A short learner profile of the individual with useful background information
2. Short Term Goal
 - The learners goal
3. Demonstration
 - A description of the demonstration
4. Skill Level
 - An example of a specific skill to be demonstrated from the matrix. (You of course will list several skills in your demonstration)
5. Rational for Accommodation
 - A description of the learning disability and an explanation as to how it creates a barrier to success.
6. A description of the accommodation to be used
7. Learners Words
 - An explanation by the learner in their own words that shows that the learner is aware of accommodation

(“The learner words” could be seen as examples of the learner’s growth in self-management and self-direction)

Note: Only numbers 2, 3, 4 and 6 would be required information in a demonstration for MTCU.

While the information in the following pages does not go into the detail you would when writing your demonstration, it may give you some ideas as to what may help your learner.

Note: The actual format you will use for your demonstration will be that which the ministry and your agency agree upon.

The Sample Accommodations

In order to try to give examples of specific accommodations, the following pages are organized in this way:

The first 20 examples are for 5 learners who have visual processing problems. For each of these 5 learners, representing the 5 LBS Levels, an example of accommodations is given that would be used in 4 demonstrations covering Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking and Math.

The second set of 20 examples is for 5 learners who have Auditory Processing Problems. The third set of 20 is for 5 learners who have Organizational Problems.

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Sample Accommodations for Learners with Visual Processing Problems

Learners with **Visual Processing** learning disabilities:

- Can sound out words
- Can blend sounds
- Can substitute letters
- Can work with word families/ rhyming words
- Very verbal, will chat
- Can't recognize words that they "know"
- Reverse letters
- Have trouble with oral reading, stumble, hesitate
- Get lost and use finger to find spot
- Spell based on the sounds
- Have problems with irregular sounds (ough, eigh)

Examples:

- Salina, Level One
- Ed, Level Two
- Vanessa, Level Three
- Naomi, Level Four
- Jeri, Level Five

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Salina Level One

Salina is a young woman of average intelligence. She went to school for 16 years but is unable to read. She has worked for the last few years at a series of jobs such as a clerk in a shoe store and for a while a receptionist. She volunteers for a charity and acts as a 'girl Friday' in their office. She keeps applying for job but even filling in the application can be difficult. Salina is very personable and often gets an interview but she ends up dominating the conversation. She knows this makes her look like she isn't a team player. She can handle her own money but has problems with number fact recall. In all she is a very nice person who needs to find ways to improve her basic literacy skills.

Level One: Reading

Learner Profile	Salina is a young woman who has worked in a small fruit and vegetable store, a shoe shop and for a short time, as a receptionist in an office. She loves people and is very chatty. Salina's ultimate goal is to get her SSGD so she can go to college to study sales and marketing. However at the moment she needs to be able to recognize familiar words.	<p>Learner Words</p> <p><i>"I found that knowing where to look on the sheets and using soundings out I can find out what the sheet is about. Then I can match it with the posted heading on the bulletin board. This works really well."</i></p>
Goal	To be able to read at the level one level so as to pursue her education goal.	
Demonstration	Salina needs to be able to recognize the memos she gets in the mail at her volunteer job and post them correctly on the bulletin board in their appropriate spot.	
Skill and Level Reading Level One	Identifies ways in which different kinds of written materials are organized (for example: schedules, menus, job postings and, letters and memos).	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Salina's visual processing problem means that she cannot immediately identify by visual scanning.	
Accommodation	Salina learns to word search for key words using phonics rather than be required to correctly read the whole paper.	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Level One: Writing

Learner Profile	Salina needs to be able to correctly spell her first, last and middle names when filling in forms. For whatever reason and no matter how much she practices she has trouble with her middle name Patricia.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“I just don’t seem to be able to just remember how to spell Patricia but if I use the funny sound way I can figure it out. I can hear the letters and then I can write it down.”</i></p>
New Goal	To write at level one so as to allow her to pursue her education goal.	
Demonstration	To be able to consistently spell her first, second and last name correctly.	
Skill and Level Level One Writing	Uses phonics to spell unfamiliar words.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Using visual memory for retrieval for even familiar words has always been a problem and an embarrassment for Salina.	
Accommodation	Salina has memorized a phonetic version of Patricia to ensure that it is spelled correctly (Pa tric i a)	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Level One: Listening and Speaking

Learner Profile	Salina is very verbal and very comfortable speaking in a group. However she often monopolizes a discussion. As a team player in a work situation, she needs to be more prudent in her involvement in a discussion. She wants to have the communication skills valued by employers and friends in group discussions	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“I know I have a lot to learn but if I only speak when no one else is, and if I wait until at least 3 other people have spoken, it seems to be better. It’s hard for me but it works and my classmates seem pleased.”</i></p>
Short term Goal	To speak at level one so as to pursue her education goal.	
Demonstration	To demonstrate to the group in her literacy class over a given period of five classes, her ability to resist interrupting and to improve her turn taking.	
Skill and Level Level One Listening and Speaking	Listen to and comment positively on the contributions of others in a group discussions.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Salina, due to problems recognizing visual information, does not recognize the visual cues from classmates as to when they have finished speaking and it’s her turn to speak.	
Accommodation	Salina learns to only speak when no one is speaking and only after at least 3 of the 7 other persons have spoken. This is the first step Salina must take. After considerable practice she will develop more sophisticated cues.	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Level One: Math

Learner Profile	Salina has always found rote recall of number facts difficult. She needs to be able to figure out an answer based on reason, not rote, and to do it quickly. She knows that she needs these mechanical math skills to enable her to pursue the next level of math skills.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“I have never been able to answer number facts correct. Now using those math tricks I know I can quickly figure out the answer. I don’t need to panic because I can’t remember it. I can figure it out.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To do math at level one so as to pursue her educational goal.	
Demonstration	Demonstrate that she can quickly figure out any question related to the nine times table within 6 seconds.	
Skill and Level	Given a rule expressed in informal language, extends a pattern.	
Affect of the Learning Disability	Salina is very verbal and has a good vocabulary but is unable to “see” a copy of the nine times table in her head. She must, using strategies, work it out. No matter how long she practices she will never have quick rote recall.	
Accommodation	Using strategies such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 times a number---the answer is 10 times minus that number • 9 times a number, the sum of the digits equal 9 	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Ed Level Two

Ed is a retired man who worked as part of a road maintenance crew for forty years. He didn't miss the job, but he sure missed his buddies who he laughed and joked with each working day. His wife of forty-five years died recently. She had always done the "paper work" like bills and letter writing. Ed likes to keep in touch with his young grandchildren who live in other provinces. His son has set him up with a computer with e-mail access. He's embarrassed by his spelling so he wants to improve so he can write to them. Now he sits on the board for his condo, a volunteer job he really likes. At work his co-workers knew he often rambled on, but they understood. Now he wants to be clearer and more business-like in his speech at the condo board. As for math, Ed has always had trouble doing math in his head. On paper it isn't as hard. He seems to forget one number when he has to add another. This is a problem at his other volunteer job working in the coffee shop at the hospital.

Level Two: Reading

Learner Profile	Ed is a retired man who worked as part of a road maintenance crew for forty years. Since his wife died he now has to pay the bills. She had always done them. He feels his reading is not good enough to be sure he understands the bills.	<p>Learner Words</p> <p><i>"I use to just look at the bottom amount and pay it. By knowing where to find the words I need and sounding them out, I find out exactly what I need to pay. There's a discount if you pay early. This is saving me money. It's great."</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To read a level two to move toward his independent goal.	
Demonstration	To sound out and recognize the words on his Public Utilities Company bill, to know if he has already paid it.	
Skill and Level Level two reading	Uses a variety of strategies to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Ed's visual recognition problems mean that he often gives up when there is a lot of text on the page. He needs to learn strategies to identify key words in a passage.	
Accommodation	Ed learns where on his PUC bill he can find the information, then uses phonic, root words and rules to sound out the appropriate words and match to the amounts.	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Level Two: Writing

Learner Profile	Ed likes to keep in touch with his young grandchildren who live in other provinces. His son has set him up with a computer with e-mail access. He has trouble with spelling. He wants to write well enough to correspond with his young grandchildren.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“I love using tricks when sounding out doesn’t work, like in the words ‘here’ and ‘hear’. I know the one that means listening has the word ‘ear’ in it. I am learning great tricks for words I can’t sound out. I wish I’d known that before. Now I can write and not worry so much that I’ll make a mistake.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To write at level two to work towards his goal of independence.	
Demonstration	To write five e-mails, one to each of his five grandchildren, to inquire how they are each doing in the sport they play.	
Skill and Level Level two writing	Write a simple letter.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Ed’s visual memory problem makes spelling difficult. No matter how he tries there are some words he just can’t remember. He needs to find ways to write sentences without the fear of spelling problems.	
Accommodation	Ed’s tutor taught him how to use the spell check function on his computer. He uses phonics and other strategies to select the correct word, e.g. the ‘ear’ in ‘hear’.	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Level Two: Listening and Speaking

Learner Profile	Ed got to know his co-workers well and they let him ramble on. Now he sits on the board for his condo and wants to be clearer and more precise in his speech. He feels he needs to choose his words wisely and to speak so that others understand. He also wants to be able to rephrase it if he feels he is not being clear.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“I always just talked. Now by waiting 5 seconds I can form better, clearer answers in my head. I sound more professional like. I must look at my audience to see if they understand. I now know that Mrs. Henderson lowers her glasses on her nose when she doesn’t understand and lifts her head and nods when she does. I am looking for other members’ cues.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To listen and speak at the level two level so as to move toward his personal goal.	
Demonstration	To answer a question from each of his literacy group members on condominium rules such that they understand (and to clarify ideas if necessary in no more than a minute.)	
Skill and Level	Rephrase to clarify ideas (for example: what I meant was, when I think about)	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Ed gets and receives all he knows orally and wants to share it orally. He tends to talk until what he says just ‘falls out’. He needs to learn how to say more with fewer words and watch the listener’s body language for cues to whether they understand him.	
Accommodation	Ed must take 5 seconds to formulate the answer, then noting the face of the listener, watch for visual cues such as furrowed brow or head nodding and react appropriately.	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Level Two: Math

Learner Profile	Ed has always had trouble doing math in his head. On paper it isn't as hard. He seems to forget one number when he has to add another. He needs to be able to mentally add or subtract small amounts so as not to embarrass himself when he volunteers at the hospital coffee cart.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>"I realized no matter how hard I tried I couldn't add in my head. I did work at it. Now I use the calculator so I give the right change. But I like to estimate to make sure I didn't push the wrong buttons. Those patients may be sick but they're not stupid. Someone tried to cheat me the other day. I could show I was right."</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To do math at the level two level to contribute to his personal goal of independence.	
Demonstration	To successfully add one or two digits supplied by his classmates and tell them what they would get from 5 dollars.	
Skill and Level	Adds and subtracts rational numbers in any form (fraction, decimals, percents): applies to practical situations. Adds and subtracts simple fractions. Adds and subtracts integers.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Ed's inability to hold information in his working memory and not replace it with new information is very weak. He is good with concepts but not with detail.	
Accommodation	Ed uses a hand-held calculator to add and make changes. He then uses estimation to ensure the correct answer	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Vanessa Level Three

Vanessa is a young mom who wants to eventually get her real estate license. She is friendly and outgoing but she is not good at details. She understands broad concepts but can't back up her views with facts. Vanessa knows that she makes errors when she writes, some because she still has grammar and spelling rules to learn. But some of her errors seem to happen for no reason. Vanessa knows that she will have to make presentations in the business world and wants to do well, because she tends to ramble in her thoughts. Math concepts have always been easy for Vanessa. She didn't do well in school and often copied the numbers wrong. Vanessa knows she will need good numeracy skills to sell houses.

Level Three: Reading

Learner Profile	Vanessa is a young mom who wants to eventually get her real estate license. She is friendly and outgoing but she is not good at details. She understands broad concepts but can't back up her views with facts. Vanessa wants to get her GED and study for her real estate license. One of the things she needs to be able to do is to read and understand long written articles.	<p>Learner Words</p> <p><i>"I really like this new way of getting detail. Now I get my cake and eat it too. I know what the article's about and I can answer questions on the detail. My notes are great because I am now able to be more organized in my presentation."</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To read at the level three in order to move toward her employment goal.	
Demonstration	Vanessa must read a three page article on a housing issue in a current real estate magazine. She must then present the issues to her group. Further, she must refer to specific details to back up her assumptions. Accuracy and reliability are key factors.	
Skill and Level	Make reasoned judgements about the accuracy and reliability of information found.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	As Vanessa has a problem with word recognition she skims more than she reads. She is able to understand the concept but misses details. If she reads for detail she tires quickly and loses her train of thought.	
Accommodation	Vanessa must learn to better identify and isolate supporting details. By writing key words down as she reads, Vanessa can go back after she understands the passage as a whole and read the individual sentence with the key words in it. She can then lists details under each key word. These details can them be used for her oral presentation.	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Level Three: Writing

Learner Profile	Vanessa knows that she makes errors when she writes. Some of these errors are due to a poor grasp of grammar along with spelling mistakes. Vanessa is embarrassed.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“Before I just wrote. I knew it was bad but I was afraid to ask for help. Now I know using spell and grammar check and my ‘finger check’. I feel I can ask friends to check it. Sometimes my friends don’t find anything wrong. I feel so good.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To write at level three to move towards her educational goal.	
Demonstration	To produce a correctly spelled and grammatically correct piece of writing by editing her own work. Vanessa must write a response to an article selected by her instructor from the newspaper.	
Skill and Level	Proofreads and corrects final drafts, focusing on basic grammar, punctuation and spelling.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Vanessa, when reading her work as well as when writing makes unexplained errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation. Cues are missed when she puts her thoughts on paper.	
Accommodation	Vanessa types her final draft on the computer; next, she runs it through the spelling and grammar checking programs. She then prints it off. Using her finger she points to each word to see if it says what she meant to convey. Vanessa then asks a competent friend to read the draft for errors and correct them before she hands the paper in.	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Level Three: Listening and Speaking

Learner Profile	Vanessa loves to talk but rambles on if allowed. She knows that she will have to make presentations in the business world and wants to do well. She wants to have the speaking and listening skills to be successful in a team related situation.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“I just love this new way to organize my thoughts; I never understood how people did it. Now with my “IREC” I can feel confident I can present information the way I like to be able to. I am really proud of myself. It’s so easy.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To speak and listen at level three so as to move toward her education goal.	
Demonstration	To make a presentation to her class that she will repeat at her upcoming local school parent meeting on the need for an improved physical education program.	
Skill and Level	To be able to present information to others in a focused and organized form on a topic of mutual interest.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	While Vanessa likes to speak at random, she is not good at detail and her ability to organize her thoughts is not precise. She needs a template for organizing her presentations.	
Accommodation	Since Vanessa always says she feels ‘like a wreck’ after she speaks in public. She and her instructor developed the template IREC. She uses it to organize her thoughts. ‘I’ is to state the issue, ‘R’ is list the reasons, ‘E’ is to give examples for each reason, and ‘C’ is a conclusion.	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Level Three: Math

Learner Profile	Math concepts have never been difficult for Vanessa. Nevertheless, she has great difficulty with accuracy, and accurate numeracy skills are needed to achieve her GED. Furthermore, numeracy skills will be necessary to sell houses.	<p>Learner Words</p> <p><i>“I love using the highlighter. I used to get so confused I’d give up. Now I feel I am in control. I almost never make an error now. It’s great!”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To do math at level three so as to move toward her educational goals.	
Demonstration	On a given day review house price on a specific page in the paper and chart how they fall into different price ranges. (e.g. over \$1,000,000, between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 between, \$250,000 and \$500,000 and below \$250,000)	
Skill and Level	Design surveys, collect data, and record the results on given spreadsheets or tally charts.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Transcribing numbers correctly is very difficult for Vanessa. She often sees numbers in different orders, and dealing with a series of long numbers is difficult. She becomes lost and confused	
Accommodation	Using several coloured highlighters, (a different one for each range), she starts to highlight the number with the colour. To coordinate the range she uses her finger and counts 000 or looks for the “K” which ends in 000. She then uses the same colour highlighters to graph them.	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Naomi Level Four

Naomi is a woman in her early 50's. She raised six children as a single mom while working as a cleaner at nights. She now feels it's her time to improve her skills and knowledge. While well informed, her literacy skills and her spoken English have always embarrassed her. Her children have done well and now encourage and support her to follow her dreams. Naomi wants to become Executive Director of her local church-based mission organization. Board members approached her and asked her to take on the role. It is a very small organization with a limited budget. She will work three days a week. As Executive Director she will be required to write well to achieve many different purposes. Naomi comes from a culture that values oral communication so she hasn't done much writing. She is a very expressive speaker, much enjoyed by all. However she wishes to develop a more business-like (text-based) approach. Naomi knows that another part of her job as an Executive Director will be to review data on the Internet and use that to develop an argument to support her organization when approaching fundraisers.

Level Four: Reading

Learner Profile	Naomi is a woman in her early 50's. She raised six children as a single mom while working as a cleaner at nights. She now feels it's her time to increase her knowledge and literacy skills. While well informed, both her literacy skills and her spoken English have always embarrassed her. Her children have done well and now support her both financially and encourage her to follow her dreams. Naomi needs to be able to read an article and summarize the issues.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>"I can read but using this software makes me more efficient. I only need to read it once or twice and I can get the details I need. If I had to read it on my own I would give up. This way I understand and have correct useful notes. It's great! One of my daughters sits on the Board of Directors; she is so proud of me"</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To read at level four in order to move closer to her employment goal.	
Demonstration	Naomi will select a recent "position paper", summarize it and explain the material to her literacy group with appropriate details.	
Skill and Level	Summarize and explain the main idea in information material (i.e. textbooks), and cite details that support main ideas.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Naomi's visual processing problems mean that she skims material but doesn't note specific details. She needs to ensure that she can "read" for these details without becoming too tired or confused. Once she slows her pace, she is unable to maintain an understanding of the whole picture.	
Accommodation	Using text-reading software she scans the report into her computer and hears it as it is read back. She then makes notes using the note-taking feature and highlights the supporting detail. From that information she develops her presentation.	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Level Four: Writing

Learner Profile	In order to become an Executive Director for her church-based mission organization, Naomi is required to write differently for different purposes. She has never given this issue much thought but is keen to learn.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“It’s great. I don’t worry I’ll miss anything. I can go over the tape in my own time. As for the other two kinds of letters, I learned where everything went (date etc.) and I made a checklist of what goes into thank you letters. You’d think I could then just know it, but I always have to refer to my checklist. But as I always said to my kids, ‘if it works, use it’.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To write at level four to reach her employment goal.	
Demonstration	To write minutes from a recent committee meeting, share it with the committee and ask for errors and omissions. To write a thank you letter for a donation received. To develop a “begging” letter as part of a fundraising campaign	
Skill and Level Level 4 Writing	Writes for various purposes (for example: point-form notes from a text, journal writing)	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Naomi focuses on overall issues and not on detail. Therefore she often misses the little points. Also since her main means of reading is skimming and looking for key issues she does not have a “feel” for style. She must find ways to create and identify key markers in different forms of writing. She needed to find her own learning patterns, as she does not respond well to direct teaching methods.	
Accommodation	Naomi asked the church group if she could tape the meeting. She then used the tape recording to create good minutes, and used the old minutes as a format. She reviewed several ‘thank you’ and ‘begging’ letters and developed the pattern she could put into her own words.	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Level Four: Listening and Speaking

Learner Profile	Naomi comes from a culture that values oral communication. She is a very expressive speaker much enjoyed by all who listen to her speak. However, she wishes to develop a more business-like (text-based) approach so she can speak appropriately in different social and business situations.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“I just love this cheat sheet of ‘do’ words and ‘don’t’ word phrases. I will need to keep updating the list but for now it is wonderful to have the confidence that I can speak differently to different groups but still not lose my ‘style’.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To listen and speak at level four to meet her employment goals.	
Demonstration	To make a presentation to the literacy group. She needs to incorporate a formal business vocabulary, yet the presentation must still be clear to those in her group.	
Skill and Level	Regularly incorporates new vocabulary into discussions and presentations.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Here again Naomi’s problem with reading means she tends to put the text in her own words for her own comprehension. She does not note or respond to the text-based vocabulary or format.	
Accommodation	Naomi has a list of words grouped into various categories that she can incorporate into her speech. She also notes the words and phrases that she uses in friendly conversation but that she does not want in a business setting. She uses these lists to create and check her presentation.	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Level Four: Math

Learner Profile	Naomi knows that part of her job as on Executive Director will be to analyse data on the internet, to use the data and to develop an argument to support her organization’s cause when approaching fundraisers.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“I just love using this feature, the cut and paste; it means that the data is correct. I used to make all sorts of errors, so many that I would just not use numbers. I just couldn’t do what I’m doing without this feature.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To do math at level four to reach her employment goal.	
Demonstration	To review the most recent data available on a specific issue and use that data to support those needs identified by her board asking for corporate support.	
Skill and Level	Makes inferences and convincing arguments that are based on data analysis (for example: uses census information to predict by how much the seniors’ population in Canada will increase)	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Naomi has always had problems with reversals and transpositions with figures. She avoids using exact numbers when talking, as she is not sure if it is correct. Once she fully understands a figure and its impact she has confidence in herself.	
Accommodation	Using a computer Naomi has learned to “cut and paste” the numbers into her presentation document. By isolating them she feels she can better control her understanding and develop her arguments accordingly.	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Jeri Level Five

Jeri is a 23-year-old artistic young man who dropped out of school at 16 due to continuous academic failure. He has held many jobs but has often been unemployed. Recently with the help of a counsellor he realized he would like a career as a custom designer of furniture. His uncle, who is in the furniture business, will hire him if he masters the literacy/numeracy skills he needs. Jeri knows that while working for his uncle, he must develop his own client base if he wishes to pursue the creative aspects of his work, rather than become just a “furniture maker”. Jeri has failed so much in school that he is unable to depend on his own abilities. Further he is very poor at accepting criticism or comments about his work. He knows that when working with clients he must listen to their needs even if they differ from his ideas and then change his work accordingly. Jeri’s work also depends on precise measurements. In the past Jeri has had difficulty and made errors in measurements which caused problems not only with fit, but also with wasted material. His use of rough estimates is not always successful.

Level Five: Reading

Learner Profile	Jeri is a 23-year-old artistic young man who dropped out of school at 16 due to continuous academic failure. He has held many jobs for short periods of time but has often been unemployed. Recently with the help of a counsellor he realized what he would like a career as a custom furniture designer. His uncle is a cabinet maker and will hire him if he masters the literacy skills he needs. One skill he doesn't have is researching.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“This software is great. I used to hate reading stuff. I could but it was so much work. It was so much easier to work it out myself. Now I can still work it out but my decisions and designs incorporate so many different ideas. It makes my product so much better.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To read at level five to move toward his employment goal.	
Demonstration	Jeri has been asked by a friend to design a simple “home office in the closet”. He needs to research print, the internet and other sources to provide a design base on his research not just his ideas.	
Skill and Level	Uses an extensive range of media texts as sources of information for personal or academic purposes; identifies and evaluates content.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Jeri has always shunned print material due to his reading problems. In fact Jeri has always ignored anyone else’s ideas. He needs to find ways to take notes and store ideas he finds in his research without taxing his limited reading and writing skills.	
Accommodation	Using a computer with a text reader and a scanner Jeri can cut and paste the issues that he identifies and put them onto a list with reference to where he got them. He can then review the list, regroup the issues and develop a final design with referenced background material.	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Level Five: Writing

Learner Profile	Jeri knows that while working for his uncle, he must develop his own client base if he wishes to pursue the creative aspects of his work, rather than become an assembly line “furniture maker”. He needs to develop the skills to produce advertising material to attract new clients.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“I always thought asking someone you trust to check your work was cheating and anyways I didn’t want anyone to see my writing. Now using the software I can do a much better job. Also I have talked to my tutor about what kind of person to ask to proofread my work. At first I was scared but I have done my homework and so far the ones I picked have been great.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To write at level five to reach his employment goal.	
Demonstration	To develop a brochure that is clear and appealing to future clients. It should also present him as a professional creative designer.	
Skill and Level	Revises and edits work, focusing on content and on complex elements of style, independently or using feedback from others.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	While Jeri is good at ideas, he is very poor at detail. Because he often misses key errors in his writing, he writes as little as possible. His greatest fear is that he will look unprofessional due to the errors in his work.	
Accommodation	Jeri uses the computer to develop his brochure. While he uses spell and grammar check, he still needs to identify several competent individuals amongst his friends who will proof his work to ensure that all words are correct and that his issues are addressed.	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Level Five: Listening and Speaking

Learner Profile	Having failed so much in school Jeri is unable to depend on his own abilities. He is very poor at taking criticism. He knows that when working with clients he must listen to their needs even if they differ from his own ideas and change his work accordingly. He needs to learn to discuss the needs and desires of another individual for whom he is making a piece of furniture, list and change what is needed, while maintaining his artistic integrity.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“I always thought I argued with people over my opinions because I was not sure of myself. It was great to know how bad I am at reading body language. Now that I have the ‘words’ and my lists I can deal with criticism better. I am trying to develop a way I can understand other’s body language. There are some great book and articles on the internet. I can use my text reader to read them to me.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To listen and speak at level five in order to achieve his educational goals.	
Demonstration	To discuss with a classmate the designs he has produced for a project requested by that classmate and to make a good case for/against any changes.	
Skill and Level	Be able to debate effectively while respecting though not necessarily agreeing with other points of view.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Jeri hates to have his work criticized. He tends to say “my way or no way” when it comes to changes. He has very poor ability to read people’s body language. He has to separate criticism from constructive comment and respond appropriately.	
Accommodation	Jeri needs to identify keywords and phrases that he can use that are not confrontational, but can question his client as to why they want the changes. He also needs to develop a vocabulary that can express his concern without making the situation worse. Unlike other learners he needs to rely on his list of phrases. He could keep them in his palm pilot. To help he might create a chart or checklist with design components and note what clients agree on so that issues that need to be discussed are isolated. Jeri knows that for the most part the client needs to be happy.	

Visual Processing Demonstrations

Level Five: Math

Learner Profile	Jeri's work depends on precise measurements. The errors in measurements cause problems with fit and wasted material. He tends to estimate but that is not always successful. He needs to be proficient with exact measurements while still estimating for cost of material.	<p>Learner Words</p> <p><i>"This talking/writing tape measure is great. No matter how careful I was I just couldn't get the number correct. Now I can get on with the job."</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To do math at level five to reach his employment goal.	
Demonstration	To estimate the approximate numbers of board feet needed to create an entertainment centre, then include a precise measurement to use as a working plan.	
Skill and Level	Recognizes when measurements or estimation is more appropriate and uses estimates to judge the reasonableness of a measurement.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Jeri transposes numbers and has an extremely poor short term working memory. He can't hold a measurement in his head even long enough to write it down. He often reads the numbers incorrectly.	
Accommodation	Jeri purchases and uses a talking tape that records the measurement and can also print out the number. He uses estimation to judge his requirements for material because there is considerable waste.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Sample Accommodations for Learners with Auditory Processing Problems

Learners with **Auditory Processing** learning disabilities:

- Can remember words they know
- Guess words that look like the word
(e.g. attraction or attractive)
- Have trouble with big words
- Say they have trouble with pronunciation
- Can't blend sounds well
- May know sounds but mix them up when sounding out
- Don't respond to rhyming clues
- Spell based on known words

Examples:

- Cuthbert, Level One
- Bill, Level Two
- Ling, Level Three
- Osbert, Level Four
- Harry, Level Five

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Cuthburt Level One

Cuthburt is a 43 year old man who has worked in a pasta factory as a shipper since he left school at 16. The factory closed down and Cuthburt is being supported for retraining. Unfortunately he has minimal literacy and numerical skills. He would like to work in shipping. His brother-in-law works in a small factory that will be needing shippers. Cuthburt needs to be able to record the number of boxes of each item he has shipped each day, and record those orders not sent. Cuthburt knows that in order to get the job and keep it in a small company, he will have to talk daily with the owner. This concerns him. He is not comfortable speaking and always feels that he sounds stupid. He is fine with “how’s it going?” but more complex discussion worries him. Cuthburt is concerned about using the factory’s tracking method; they use SCU numbers.

Level One: Reading

Learner Profile	Cuthburt is a 43 year old man who has worked in a pasta factory all of his adult life. The factory closed down and Cuthburt is being supported for retraining. Unfortunately he has minimal literacy and numerical skills. He would like to work in shipping. It is a job that he would like to do and there is a vacancy. He wants to improve his skill level so as to read well enough to match the labels on the boxes with the shipping invoice.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“I use to try to sound things out. It made me more confused. I know the letter sound but I just can’t put them together. Now I just learn the words I need by practicing them. It’s great. I got a list from my brother-in-law so that’s what I learned. My tutor says once I know them we can write sentences. It is so much easier when the words my tutor wants me to learn are ones I already know.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To read at the level one level so as to achieve his employment goal.	
Demonstration	To identify the names of common articles shipped by a small company that his brother-in-law works for.	
Skill and Level	Reads from repertoire of common sight words taken from everyday life.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Cuthburt can’t effectively use phonics to decode words. He needs to memorize them by sight.	
Accommodation	Cuthburt is not required to use any other aide but rote memory to learn these words. By forcing him to try and sound them out by letters, he becomes confused.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Level One: Writing

Learner Profile	Cuthburt needs to be able to record the numbers of boxes of each item he has shipped each day. He also needs to record which orders could not be shipped that night. He has to enter that information into the company computer on a standard form.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“This is great. I love learning these words. The ‘cheat’ sheet is there to help me. I know that once I am confident about the words, I won’t need it for them, but I will for new words. Now that I know these words, learning is easier.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To write at level one to reach his employment goals.	
Demonstration	Using a list of typical data from his brother-in-law, enter the information on a form similar to the one they use at the factory.	
Skill and Level	Copy from printed material.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Cuthburt must rely on memorized whole words to be functional at this stage. As he expands his sight memory vocabulary, he will be exposed to more words that will then become familiar.	
Accommodation	Cuthburt uses a ‘cheat’ sheet listing the words he needs to complete the form. Later, as new words are needed, he will add them to his list.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Level One: Listening and Speaking

Learner Profile	Cuthburt knows that in order to get the job and keep it in a small company, he will have to talk daily with the owner. He is not a comfortable speaker and always has a feeling that he sounds stupid. He is fine with "How's it going?" but more complex discussions worry him. He needs to be confident enough to listen and comment intelligently on the informal discussions at his worksite.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>"Because I don't read the paper and I don't follow and remember what people say very well I was too scared to talk. Now I watch the news channel at night and I seem to learn better when I see the pictures. I'm proud I can raise the issues and I like it that my teacher doesn't expect me to join in if I don't know anything about what the guys are talking about. I am getting better though at asking good questions. Cause when I do that they have to say it again then sometimes I remember."</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To listen and speak at level one to achieve his educational goals	
Demonstration	Based on watching the T.V. news Cuthburt must discuss an interesting story. He must then listen to the comments of others and return a positive comment back.	
Skill and Level	Listen to and comment positively on the contributions of others in group discussions.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Cuthburt has very weak auditory short-term and working memory. Rather than speak he will remain silent. He needs to be prepared.	
Accommodation	Cuthburt is only evaluated on the quality of his comments on the situation about which he has prior knowledge. When the discussion concerns a subject about which he does not have prior knowledge he is evaluated on his ability to solicit more information.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Level One: Math

Learner Profile	Cuthburt must record numerical data corresponding to the item sent for those unfulfilled orders. The items have SCU numbers. He needs to be able to correctly chart the information needed at the end of his shift.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“I can copy numbers fine but I was scared that I’d put the wrong work in the wrong place on the record sheet we’d have to use at work. Now with my ‘word list’ I can put the right stuff in the right places. It sure takes a load off my mind. Now instead of being scared I am beginning to feel I can handle the new job.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To do math at the level one level in order to pursue his employment goals.	
Demonstration	To correctly copy a series of items and their SCU numbers onto a chart.	
Skill and Level	Organises material on concrete graphs and pictographs using one-to-one correspondence.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Cuthburt was able to copy well, but was often unsure of what he had copied if he did not know the words. It was important to learn the words he was copying and to understand how to record the words and numbers on the chart.	
Accommodation	He needed a sample ‘cheat sheet’ of the chart as well as the list of common items to make sure he was putting the data in the right spot.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Bill Level Two

Bill is in his late 20's; he had left school in Newfoundland at age 14 because, as he said, "he weren't learnin nothin". He had lots of small jobs but always got into arguments over complaints that he had not done the job that he had been told to do. Bill doesn't like to write as he can't spell most words. He can't sound them out so he is just lost. He feels so stupid. Bill tends to get into trouble because he doesn't 'understand' what people tell him to do. This has been a huge problem at work. Bill is just coming to understand that maybe *he* is not 'hearing' what is said. Bill with practice is good with math but he isn't familiar with math vocabulary and has difficulty reading math problems or explaining how he got an answer.

Level Two: Reading

Learner Profile	Bill was in his late 20's. He had left school in Newfoundland at age 14 because, as he said, "he weren't learnin nothin". He had lots of small jobs but always got into arguments over complaints that he had not done the job that he had been told to do. He knows he can't get ahead without better reading and writing skills. He has work skills but that's not enough. He has to read better.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>"People always told me not to guess what a word was. They used to say sound it out. Well I just can't. I've really tried but I can't. Now that I know some different ways to figure out a word, like what word fits or makes sense. It's great. I was always told to look for little words in his words and sound it out. That didn't work neither. Now my tutor taught me to see if I can find a base word - root work he calls it - and that sometimes helps me figure it out. I like that he doesn't always tell me to sound it out"</i></p>
Short Term Goal	Read at level two to pursue his educational goals.	
Demonstration	Bill must read a passage developed by his tutor containing words from his known sight vocabulary. He must then figure out unknown words using context or root words and explain to his instructor how he figured them out.	
Skill and Level	Uses a variety of strategies to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words (for example: uses the context, breaks the word into syllables or other recognisable units; uses a dictionary; uses phonics)	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Bill is unable to decode using sounds. He needs to expand the choices beyond "I know this word", "I don't know it". He guesses words based on what the word looks like and not what it means.	
Accommodation	Bill is not evaluated on his ability to use phonetic based skills, only sight and context cues.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Level Two: Writing

Learner Profile	Bill doesn't like to write as he can't spell most words. He can't sound them out so he is just lost. He feels so stupid. Bill wants to be able to write a simple answers to a question.	<p>Learner Words</p> <p><i>"This word book I use is great. It took me a while to decide that my tutor was right; that it is better for me to write using the words in the book than it is to not write because I can't figure out how to spell that myself. I love it that it doesn't go against me, my poor spelling that is. Now I'm getting to be a pretty good writer. I never seemed to be able to say what I wanted when I talked. Now I can get my idea across when I write. Funny huh?"</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To write at level two to reach his educational goal.	
Demonstration	Bill must answer simple questions based on a story he has read. The answers have to be sentences and the words spelled correctly.	
Skill and Level	Writes answers to simple comprehension questions in sentence form.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Bill's visual memory is good once he learns a word, but using sounds to spell is extremely difficult. He needs a more reliable way to write words he can't remember how to spell.	
Accommodation	Bill has a small book that he using as a personal dictionary. Later as he gets a job these words and others can be loaded on his computer or palm pilot. Bill is not evaluated on his ability to spell but on his ability to produce a correctly spelled sentence.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Level Two: Listening and Speaking

Learner Profile	Bill tends to get into trouble because he doesn't 'understand' what people tell him to do. This has been a huge problem at work. Bill is just coming to understand that maybe <i>he</i> is not 'hearing' what is said. But he needs to learn to ask for clarification and to learn ways to understand and remember information given orally.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>"I never knew I missed so much. I thought people were lying to me, picking on me, trying to make me feel stupid. Now using my assignment diary I can see when I missed something. I think I can find a way to use this at work. That way I'll be sure I know what to do."</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To speak and listen at level two to pursue his educational goals.	
Demonstration	After being given a short series of instructions for a class assignment, Bill must ask questions appropriately to ensure he has all his information and then repeat back the instruction correctly.	
Skill and Level	Ask for clarification.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Bill processes information slowly and therefore he misses the second and third step instructions. He is often unaware that step 2 and 3 were even discussed.	
Accommodation	Bill learns to use an assignment diary that note subject, length, due dates and other information needed to complete a task. On checking if one of the boxes is empty, he practises how to politely get his instructor to give him the specific information. Bill is not assumed to be competent just using his memory.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Level Two: Math

Learner Profile	Bill with practice is good with math but he isn't familiar with math vocabulary and has difficulty reading math problems or explaining how he got an answer. Math is more than numbers, it's understanding relationships and using accurate vocabulary to explain them. Bill wants to expand his math vocabulary and his ability to describe relationships.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>"I really like my making diagrams to try to figure out what I want to say. It makes more sense that way. Then I can make sure the words I use are the right ones. I feel I can explain what I want better."</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To do math at level two to move toward his educational goal.	
Demonstration	To explain to his literacy group why multiplication is just fast adding.	
Skill and Level	Explain a pattern rule.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Language does not come easily to Bill. He thinks in pictures not words. He can visualize and understand how a math rule works, but is unable to verbalize his thoughts to others.	
Accommodation	Bill learns to make a visual representation of the relationship to be described. He then puts in the words and constructs a sentence from that model. He will continue to use diagrams to organize his thoughts prior to speaking or writing information. Bill is evaluated on his understanding and use of his diagram as well as his presentation.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Ling Level Three

Ling is 19 and was born in Canada but feels she should go to an ESL class. Speaking is difficult for her. She wants to go into Fashion Design but she needs to improve her English and get her GED. She has some private clients now but she has trouble getting what they want right. She isn't a shy person but finds it hard to put her thoughts into words. She has a mix of basic and general subjects but no diploma. Ling finds writing hard work. Her stories are disorganized and she tends to use words she knows rather than what she wants to say. Ling isn't always sure she understands but doesn't like to ask. Ling has a lot of trouble explaining anything clearly and concisely.

Level Three: Reading

Learner Profile	Ling is 19 and was born in Canada and speaks only English but feels she should go to an ESL class. Speaking is difficult for her. She isn't a shy person but finds it hard to put her thoughts into words. She has a mix of basic and general subjects but no diploma. Ling needs to get her GED so she can go into fashion design, but needs to improve her English skills.	<p>Learner Words</p> <p><i>"I find the charts I made really helpful. I now have a way of figuring out if I'm using the right word. After I use them for a while I sort of know them. Then when I want to check I can just sort of see it in mind. I still use the charts but they are in my mind now. It's funny, but great. Words are easier now."</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To read at level three so as to pursue her educational goal.	
Demonstration	To identify a series of patterns of word endings that will enable her to identify how to pronounce and use the word.	
Skill and Level	Recognise patterns of word structure (for example: -ation in nation, information), and use them to determine pronunciation.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Ling's auditory memory is such that she doesn't remember word endings. She often uses the wrong case of a word and feels stupid.	
Accommodation	Ling begins to chart and maintain those patterns which she will put to memory as a tool to identify both how to pronounce a word and its grammatical value.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Level Three: Writing

Learner Profile	Ling finds writing hard work. Her stories are disorganized and she tends to use words she knows rather than what she wants to say. She wants to write clear paragraphs with a good choice of vocabulary.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“The chart really works. I can see the issues clearly using it. The thesaurus function with the text reader gives me more word choices. My work doesn’t sound so dumb anymore.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To write at level three to pursue her educational goals.	
Demonstration	To write a clear response to an editorial neighbourhood paper.	
Skill and Level	With assistance, brainstorms and organises ideas for writing.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Ling doesn’t read because it takes so long, so she doesn’t have much exposure to writing. She doesn’t look words up because she can’t sound them out, so she uses her limited known vocabulary.	
Accommodation	Ling learns to make a chart of the issues; she lists the pro issues then the con issues. She then ‘sees’ the issues more clearly. She also learns to use a thesaurus function on her computer using a text reader and this gives her choices of vocabulary. Ling’s tutor compares the written response to her article with the chart she made.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Level Three: Listening and Speaking

Learner Profile	Ling isn't always sure she understands but doesn't like to ask. She wants to be confident enough to ask questions. If she is to be a designer, she will need to take instructions from her clients.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>"It was hard to learn to take notes, but now I can it's great. I can easily take notes when a client wants to discuss a design. Then I tell her back what it is I believe she wants. It makes it so much better. I make this chart listing the things people want (colour, material, details) then I make a picture. It really works. My clients are much happier now."</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To listen and speak at level three to move toward her educational goals.	
Demonstration	Each person in Ling's literacy group must make a presentation on something that is interesting to them. This is a normal practice. Ling must rephrase what has been said and ask for clarification if necessary.	
Skill and Level	Rephrases and clarifies ideas that were not clearly understood.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Ling misses detail information as she processes things slowly. She needs a visual or written record to ensure she knows what's been said.	
Accommodation	Ling learns to take notes when someone speaks, then to review them and ask if she is correct. Ling is evaluated not only on her question but on the notes she took.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Level Three: Math

Learner Profile	Ling has a lot of trouble explaining anything clearly and concisely. This is a problem because Ling must be able to explain patterns and designs to others if she wants to be a designer.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“I find explaining things using my charts so much easier. Also when I put the words in the charts, I sound so much smarter. It makes telling why I like or don’t like a certain combination so much easier.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To do math at level three to achieve her educational goal.	
Demonstration	To explain the combination of 3 different patterned materials and how they work together in a suit she designed.	
Skill and Level	Describe patterns encountered in any context (for example: quilt patterns, money) makes models of the patterns and creates charts to display the patterns.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	While Ling understands how these materials fit together with similar themes of colours or texture, she has trouble verbalizing it.	
Accommodation	In order to do this, Ling creates a chart listing the similarities or contrasts using categories such as colour, print, design or texture. She ensures she puts the vocabulary on the chart then uses the chart to explain why it works.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Osbert Level Four

Osbert is a plumber by trade in his late 40's. His children have finished school and left home and now he has an opportunity to take the risk of starting his own business. It has been his dream and he knows his literacy skills are weak and his math is rusty. To be successful Osbert needs to be able to provide estimates that would contain the cost of materials, labour as well as a description of the job to be done. In the past he has lost money because he underestimated the cost of material and labour. Osbert tends not to listen. When he gets instructions from his clients he says nothing if he disagrees or finds problems in what the other person is saying. Osbert needs a budget for each project including cost overhead and profit.

Level Four: Reading

Learner Profile	Osbert is a plumber by trade in his late 40's. His children have left home and now he has an opportunity to take the risk of starting his own business. He knows his literacy skills are weak and his math is rusty. Osbert needs to read well enough to deal with the contracts that he will have with his customers.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>"I never did much with computers but this text reader program really helps. Some people just listen to it but I read along. It helps me learn the words and get through the stuff quicker. I don't get so tired and I can spend my time making sure I understand. Later I can buy a palm pilot or blackberry. Then I can do this and it will be more convenient."</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To read at level four to achieve his employment goal.	
Demonstration	Osbert, using a standard plumbing contract can explain each of the sections and how they are interdependent.	
Skill and Level	Explains how various elements in a work of fiction function in relation to each other (for example: ways in which setting and plot development are interrelated)	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Osbert reads slowly. He needs to familiarize himself with the new vocabulary, but once done, he can proceed but he often gives up half way through, due to fatigue.	
Accommodation	Osbert scans the contract into the computer, uses the text reader option and listens and reads along with each section until he knows what is covered.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Level Four: Writing

Learner Profile	Osbert needs to be able to provide estimates describing the cost of the materials and labour as well as a description of the job to be done. In the past he has had trouble with the estimates he has given. He needs to be able to create professional estimates that have clear information and specific terms related to the job.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“It is so much better using the computer form. It makes it easier but I also have the other stuff I need. The technical names of stuff and the codes. Now my estimates look professional especially using those technical words. I can later load it onto a laptop or blackberry. You know they even have a collapsible key board I can use with my palm pilot when I get one.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To write at level four to pursue his employment goal.	
Demonstration	To create a complete and accurate estimate of the construction of an additional washroom in the location where Osbert takes his literacy program. Special attention has to be given to the needs of learners with disabilities.	
Skill and Level	Uses the special terminology in a particular area of study if necessary.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Osbert is a man of action not words. He tends to avoid being precise, because he does not feel he has the oral or written skills to explain himself.	
Accommodation	Osbert uses an estimate form he has created on the computer that allows him to put in standard information, it requires him to be precise. He also keeps a list of words he usually uses plus technical terms in the computer as well as websites that list information he needs such as codes for special need construction. He uses these to complete his demonstration.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Level Four: Listening and Speaking

Learner Profile	Osbert tends not to listen and says nothing if he disagrees or finds fault or errors in what the other person is saying. He needs to listen and speak well enough to give his client immediate feedback if there is a problem in doing what they ask.	<p>Learner Words</p> <p><i>“Before I just listened to a client and usually forgot a lot. Now using my chart I can make sure I can remember and understand what they want. Some of my classmates asked for things like marble floors and Italian faucets. I felt good being able to explain that that was against the code and why. In the past I knew but didn’t know how to tell them. It caused me a lot of grief. That’s why I always worked for someone else. Now I can work for myself.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To listen and speak at level four to achieve his employment goal.	
Demonstration	To listen to the instructor and his classmates describe what they want in the new classroom bathroom and comment constructively on the possible problems involved.	
Skill and Level	Listen to and comment positively on the contribution of others in the group discussion.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Persons with auditory processing disability often don’t listen well. Some avoid confrontation because they don’t think they can make their point well.	
Accommodation	Using a chart that has a space to note all the required and desired information, Osbert takes notes, and then reviews what he has written, clarifying what they want by asking them questions.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Level Four: Math

Learner Profile	Osbert needs a reasonable budget for each project cost that includes cost of material, labour, overhead and a profit for him so he needs to be able to prepare an estimate that is accurate.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“Before I just wanted to get the estimate done. I didn’t write a detailed one because I didn’t know how to spell and I didn’t know how to write it. Now I can concentrate on the numbers and spend time getting them right. Using my budget form I can then just plug in the number.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To do math at level four in order to achieve his employment goal.	
Demonstration	To create a budget for the construction of the bathroom on site for less than \$10,000.	
Skill and Level	Estimates and counts amounts of money to \$10,000, using a calculator for most calculations.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Osbert tends to be a straight-ahead thinker. When things get complicated he tends to estimate or round off, and often provides a less than accurate outcome. He also doesn’t know the words to use or can’t spell them.	
Accommodation	He uses a budget form that he developed that includes all his cost and ensures a profit. He uses his calculator for correct amounts. He can then see how close to his ‘estimate’ he was.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Harry Level Five

Harry is 25 years old. As a teenager he was in and out of trouble with alcohol and substance abuse. He was also molested as a child. He has been 'clean' for three years and been volunteering in a shelter for street kids for the past two years. He now wants to go to college and be a youth worker. Harry tends not to be a talker or a writer, but knows that in order to be successful in his career he will have to interview kids effectively and write not just reports, but many other things. Harry knows that in his role as an advocate for youth, he will have to be able to present their problems to others. Harry works much better with diagrams than with words. He needs to develop reading skills.

Level Five: Reading

Learner Profile	Harry is 25 years old. As a teenager he has been in and out of trouble with alcohol and substance abuse. He has been clean for three years and has been volunteering in a shelter for street kids for the past two years. He himself was molested as a child. He wants to improve his reading skills in order to get into a program in college to become a youth worker.	<p>Learner Words</p> <p><i>"I just love having a way to visualize the data I'm collecting. But when I had to listen I missed so much. Knowing how to capture information and then get it in print really helps. I love using charts and diagrams."</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To read at level five so as to reach his education goal.	
Demonstration	Harry must review the issues raised in the local press, radio and television on the recent arrest of a young panhandler for trespassing and comment on the coverage and the issue described.	
Skill and Level	Uses an extensive range of media texts as sources of information for personal or academic purposes; identifies and evaluates content.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Harry tends not to put his thoughts on paper or voice his opinions. This is due somewhat to his lack of vocabulary and experience reading text. Both of which stem from his problem processing auditory information. He is however very good at analysing situations. He needs to learn how to share his thoughts with others in a way that is natural to him.	
Accommodation	He uses tapes of radio shows and television news cast as well as clippings from the media. He analyses these excerpts by charting them and drawing lines to connect similar issues and draws them together to create a press response. Harry is evaluated not only on his response but his effective use of his data collection strategies.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Level Five: Writing

Learner Profile	Harry tends not to be a talker or a writer, but he knows that in order to be successful in his career he will have to write not just reports, but many other things. He needs to be able to share his views and concerns with others in a written form.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“This was fantastic. I have always been more comfortable with picture. It was hard because it couldn’t be like art. It had to fit the form of an essay. I really had a lot to learn. I worked hard and it paid off. I’m proud of it. Also there is some interest at my volunteer job to use it for training volunteers.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To listen and speak at level five to pursue his educational goal	
Demonstration	To develop an article that will inform a wide audience about the broader cause of youth involvement in drugs.	
Skill and Level	Communicates ideas and information for a variety of purposes (to evaluate information, to compare points of view) and to specific audiences, using conventions appropriate for their purposes.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Harry doesn’t like to write, he thinks in pictures. His vocabulary, spelling and knowledge of text-based writing is weak.	
Accommodation	He is allowed to create a 13 minute video essay, picturing the issues he wishes to raise using the computer and donated software available at the college. He does however have to fulfill the same requirement of an essay, i.e. form, idea development, story conclusion, etc. He is aware of the components.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Level Five: Listening and Speaking

Learner Profile	Harry knows that in his role as an advocate for youth, he needs to be able to present their problems to others. He needs to be able to listen and organize information and explain what they are saying to others.	<p>Learner Words</p> <p><i>“I’d just love to get up and talk like some guys but I can’t so it’s great that I have a way to share my ideas. Using the power point presentation makes me look so professional and I can give people the notes.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To listen and speak aloud so as to achieve his educational goal.	
Demonstration	To seek out five youth he knows using a set of predetermined questions, record their answers and find common themes. He must then relate their concerns to the literacy group he works with.	
Skill and Level	To develop a practical framework	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Harry doesn’t always listen well. He needs help to recall.	
Accommodation	Harry creates a written document that charts their responses, in a way that clearly gets the message across. He then uses the chart to create a power point presentation that he presents to the class.	

Auditory Processing Demonstrations

Level Five: Math

Learner Profile	Harry works much better with diagrams than with words. He needs to develop this skill. That way he can better make use of statistics in his field of interest.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Learning to use graphs to make my point rather than listing points or ideas is so much easier for me and I think better because I can make my arguments clearer and I understand it completely myself, that’s the best part.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To do math at level five to pursue his educational goal.	
Demonstration	Using various graphs to depict the relationship between abused youth/children and drug abuse, and to show the role sex or sexual orientation play, then use this information to suggest appropriate intervention.	
Skill and Level	Constructs line graphs, comparative bar graphs, circle graphs, and histograms, with or without the help of a computer, and uses the information to solve problems (for example: extrapolates from a line graph to predict a future trend)	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Harry desperately wants to express himself, but words don’t work, graphs do.	
Accommodation	Allowing Harry to share his concern in minimal text ways is very important. He is evaluated on his ability to produce meaningful graphic material with minimal text.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Sample Accommodations for Learners with Organizational Problems

Learners with **Organizational** learning disabilities:

- Take longer to understand and respond to your questions, but the quality of the answer is good
- Have trouble giving clear, concise answers to simple questions
- Complain that they have trouble focussing
- Need rewording of questions, but good answers
- Have trouble with attendance and follow through

Examples:

- Jasmine, Level One
- Harold, Level Two
- Verity, Level Three
- Luk, Level Four
- Nellie, Level Five

Organizational Demonstrations

Jasmine Level One

Jasmine seemed like a 25-year-old free spirit. She was very attractive, bright and always smiling and joking. She helped out in her family’s corner store. Her aunt said the customers loved her but she was not reliable or consistent in the way she performed her duties. Jasmine wanted to improve her skills and get a job away from the family. Jasmine rarely wrote in school. She is now serious about getting out on her own and has pursued inquiries about being a receptionist in an office. The job she wants doesn’t require typing, only taking brief messages. However they have to be clear and spelled correctly. Jasmine has always said the first thing that pops into her head. Often it takes a group conversation off topic. Sometimes what she says is not the truth, but a convenient answer. Jasmine has always had trouble with answering math questions in her head, even simple ones. She wants to find a way to deal with this problem as she will often be asked to place coffee orders from several people and ensures everyone receives the correct change.

Level One: Reading

Learner Profile	Jasmine seemed like a 25-year-old free spirit. She was very attractive, bright and always smiling and joking. She helped out in her family’s corner store. Her aunt said the customers loved her but she was not reliable or consistent in the way she performed her duties. Jasmine wanted to improve her skills and get a job away from the family. She wanted to be more accurate and consistent in responding to questions.	<p>Learner Words</p> <p><i>“It really helps to make a list and refer to it. When I need to tell something important. I don’t want people to think I’m careless. I do understand how to do things. I just seem to always take the easy way out. Now I have a way to change it.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To read at level one to pursue her employment goal.	
Demonstration	Jasmine was asked to explain correctly, in detail, what she did to ring in the sale of a bag of chips and a litre of milk.	
Skill and Level	Retells a simple story or account of an event in proper sequence and recalls information in it accurately.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Jasmine seemed a free spirit because she had great difficulty organizing information. She floated through school and life by avoiding situations that required precision. In relating this account she would ‘forget’ to talk about how she would ring in the tax differently even though she did it on a consistent basis.	
Accommodation	Jasmine must list the things she did on paper. The words she needed were on the cash register she used at work, and then share them with her practitioner. She found by writing them out in order, she was less likely to go on a tangent.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Level One: Writing

Learner Profile	Jasmine rarely wrote in school. She is serious about getting out on her own and has pursued inquiries about being a receptionist in an office. The job she wants doesn't require typing, only taking brief messages. However they have to be clear and spelled correctly. She needs to be able to write a simple, correctly spelled, message.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>"I never wrote messages down, then I forgot. I was embarrassed that I couldn't spell simple stuff like names. But most of all it was easier to say 'sure, okay' and then forget. When I got caught I say 'Oh I lost it' or 'Did you say that, Gosh I don't remember, sorry'. I know it looks careless, but I didn't know how to change it. You know, just having a list of names to refer to and learning how to ask how to spell a word helps. Just using the message pad helps me fill in the 'who' and 'who from' and the message. I don't need to forget, I can do it now."</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To write at level one so as to pursue her employment goals.	
Demonstration	Jasmine must privately take a simple message from each of five students. She must then write it down with the name of the person to whom it is for.	
Skill and Level	Write simple but complete sentences.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Jasmine tends to not follow through. Her sentences are fragments and the spelling haphazard. She can spell, but doesn't apply rules or even search her memory.	
Accommodation	Her peers judge Jasmine's work. This is important to her. Also, she has learned to use a message pad and a list of the correct spelling of everyone's names. She also knows how to ask someone to spell a word in their message, and she does it.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Level One: Listening and Speaking

Learner Profile	Jasmine has always said the first thing that pops into her head. Often it takes a group conversation off topic. Sometimes what she says is not the truth, but a convenient answer. She wants to present herself as a consistent and hard working individual, in order to obtain a job as a receptionist.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“Just taking that five seconds forces me to think either about the correct response or comment on whether I really have something to say. I feel better about being in a group discussion. Before it was sort of a ‘hit and run’ before anyone realized what I said and could question me.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To listen and speak at level one so as to achieve her employment goal.	
Demonstration	During the next five literacy classes she must wait at least five seconds before responding to any question asked by the practitioner or a classmate, plan her response and answer thoughtfully and truthfully.	
Skill and Level	Responds correctly to questions or comments.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Jasmine is highly impulsive. She has ADHD and often is unable to focus. She says what is in her head or what the questioner wants to hear. She does not see it as lying. Others do.	
Accommodation	The practitioner and the other students must allow her those five seconds to answer and take her responses seriously. They must ‘call’ her on anything they believe is not accurate or true. Jasmine must learn to use this strategy on her own.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Level One: Math

Learner Profile	Jasmine has always had trouble with answering math questions in her head, even simple ones. She wants to find a way to deal with this problem as she will often be asked to place coffee orders from several people and ensure everyone receives the correct order. She needs to be able to add more effectively.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“When I’m sent out for several coffee orders at work I don’t have to pay the coffee shop it’s on our tab. However I used to get the number of coffee and cream, no sugar etc. confused. Everyone got so mad at me. I made this order form from the coffee shop. Now I can check off the boxes and just count up the number of each kind. It’s so easy now.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To do math at level one.	
Demonstration	Jasmine is required to add five single digit numbers in her head.	
Skill and Level	Mentally adds one-digit numbers.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Jasmine’s problems with focusing are made worse under stress. She usually just guesses, often wrongly.	
Accommodation	Jasmine keeps a small note pad and writes down the sum of the first two numbers. She then writes down the sum of the third number and so on. Later she may use a calculator. So while the skill requires her to do the math mentally, Jasmine is allowed to do it on paper.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Harold Level Two

Harold is a shy 32-year-old man. He is divorced and has two small children. His wife has custody. She says she and the children can't depend on him. She complains that he says one thing and does the other. He works in a factory job, but almost lost it when they suddenly changed the line. He feels stupid and helpless. Harold is always worried he will miss his kid's visits because he gets the date or time wrong or he just forgets. He is so easily distracted and feels overwhelmed sometimes. Harold tends to let people "walk all over him," (these are his words). In discussions, he tends to remain silent. He knows his co-workers think he is "not too bright". He wants to show them he has thought and ideas, good ones, but he is afraid he'll sound stupid. Harold is worried that his kids will be like him and hate math. They are girls and he wants to help them to be confident with math, not like he was. He knows that the preschool they attend focus on math vocabulary.

Level Two: Reading

Learner Profile	Harold is a shy 32-year-old man. He is divorced and has two small children. His wife has custody. She says she and the children can't depend on him. She complains that he says one thing and does the other. He works in a factory job, but almost lost it when they suddenly changed the line. He feels stupid and helpless. He needs to improve his reading skills so that he can read to his preschool kids when they come and visit.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>"My kids can't read but I was afraid they'd ask me questions I couldn't answer. I didn't even try to read it to them. Now I'm ready. I have already asked myself questions so I'd be ready for them. And do you know now I understand more easily. Bonus huh?"</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To read at level two to pursue his independence goal.	
Demonstration	To identify and pre-read three books on a variety of subjects that his preschool children would like.	
Skill and Level	Reads a variety of fiction and non-fiction materials.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Harold tends to get lost even when reading simple text. He needs to develop ways to focus on meaning rather than words.	
Accommodation	For each story Harold must guess the questions his children might ask and be prepared to answer, so he is evaluated not only on whether he understands a passage or a form, but what questions would lead to that understanding.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Level Two: Writing

Learner Profile	Harold is always worried he will miss his kid's visits because he gets the date or time wrong or he just forgets. He is so easily distracted and feels overwhelmed sometimes. He needs to identify the most effective way to remember a date or time.	<p>Learner Words</p> <p><i>"It seems so simple but I guess it was finding a way that was easy for me. I always have milk in my tea and cereal so I always go to the fridge. I can't lose the fridge. And my girls call me the first of every month and I redo the calendar on the phone with them. My wife always makes sure they phone cause she reminds me to write her maintenance cheque. Oh well I get what I want, to visit the girls, and she gets what she wants, the money."</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To write at level two so as to pursue his personal goal.	
Demonstration	To create a chart/calendar with the date and time for his kids' next visit.	
Skill and Level	Selects and correctly uses the format suited to purpose for writing (for example: letter, email, chart)	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Harold has tried writing the date with his kids in a journal, but he misplaced the journal. His wife emails him to remind him, but he doesn't check it regularly.	
Accommodation	Harold posts a write-on calendar on his fridge with the date. He checks it every morning when he gets his breakfast. He puts a line through the day to prove to himself that he checked it. It works because he hasn't missed a meeting since he started.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Level Two: Listening and Speaking

Learner Profile	Harold tends to let people “walk all over him.” These are his words. In discussions, he tends to remain silent. He knows his co-workers think he is “not too bright”. He wants to show them he has thought and ideas, good ones, but he is afraid he’ll sound stupid. He wants to voice his opinions in a clear and precise way and clarify what he said if he was misinterpreted.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“I have ideas but I take time to think them out. It’s nice the class gives me time. I also found that if I ask for more information most people repeat what they said again in different words. That way I get a second chance to understand. Nice trick, huh?”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To listen and speak at level two and pursue his personal goals.	
Demonstration	On a specific day to participate in the group discussion that occurs at break time and voices his opinion and clarifies it if necessary.	
Skill and Level	Rephrases to clarify ideas (for example: what I mean was, when I think about)	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Harold takes longer to absorb what is said and longer to formulate answers. He needs to be allowed time to think and respond.	
Accommodation	The group is aware of his problem and after asking his opinion allow him time to formulate a response. While at school he will gain confidence in his ability and begin to develop phrases, such as “what I think is” or “can you tell me more?” That enables him to buy time to plan a response.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Level Two: Math

Learner Profile	Harold is worried that his kids will be like him and hate math. They are girls and he wants to help them to be confident with math, not like he was. He knows that the preschool they attend focus on math vocabulary. He wants to develop the math language to reinforce his kid's work at preschool.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>"It's funny, now that my teacher has me making charts, things are easier. I like charts. They help to organize my ideas. It's so much easier answering from a chart than from my head. Oh, and I'm thinking of getting one of those hand-held computer things and put my charts in it. I want the girls to see their dad is 'high tech'."</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To listen and speak at level two and pursue his personal goals.	
Demonstration	Using the story/picture books identifying ten places so he can use comparative math language.	
Skill and Level	Uses mathematical language to describe relative times, sizes, temperatures, amounts of money, areas, masses and capacities (for example: higher office building, fewer cups)	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Harold is often confused by terms such as 'greater than' and 'less than'. They seem to lose their meaning if he tries to use them. He gives up. Also if a problem has more than two steps he gets lost.	
Accommodation	Harold created a small chart with the most common comparative words and put pictures to the left and right to show their meaning, and used it in his demonstration. He also put a copy on his fridge and a small one in his wallet. He began to associate the picture with the word and gradually it became more automatic, but he still uses them.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Verity Level Three

Verity is a 38-year-old woman who grew up in the Caribbean, but came to Canada at age 18. She has worked for twenty years as a nurse in various nursing homes. Her present employers see her abilities and want to encourage her to become a certified nurse. They paid for some private testing and found she has a high IQ but has problems organizing information. She wants to desperately, but lacks the literacy and numeracy skills to pass the entrance exam at the college. Verity doesn't like to write anything but short notes. She knows as a nurse she will have to write reports and at college she will have to write essays. She knows the grammar rules and spells well, but she just can't seem to get her thoughts down. Verity has trouble focusing when given new instructions. Luckily in the nursing home, few instructions are new, and she knows the routines. She is worried about her ability to take instructions from the doctors when she becomes a nurse. Verity has never enjoyed math, in fact she hates it, but she did pass her courses. She gets confused so easily and guesses or estimates rather than do the work for a precise answer, but at work she makes sure it is right.

Level Three: Reading

Learner Profile	Verity is a 38-year-old woman who grew up in the Caribbean, but came to Canada at age 18. She has worked for twenty years as a nurse in various nursing homes. Her present employers see her abilities and want to encourage her to become a certified nurse. She wants to desperately, but lacks the literacy and numeracy skills to pass the entrance exam at the college. She needs to be better able to get the correct information from what she reads.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“Funny, I can read fine but I just could never really make sense of it. Does that make sense to you? What I needed was to learn how to understand and how to decide how much or little to read. I’d never tried searching for information, skimming it or any of those things. Now I am way better at understanding. It is so easy now.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To read at the level three level to pursue her educational goals.	
Demonstration	To explain the most appropriate reading strategies for three different pieces of reading given by the practitioner.	
Skill and Level	Selects appropriate reading strategies (for example: adjust reading speed according to the purpose of reading or the difficulty of the piece; make inferences; record key points)	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Verity reads material at work, but doesn't always understand. She doesn't read fiction because she says it takes too long. Verity needs to overtly understand how to make reading style choices based on what the results of the reading would be. She doesn't know how to make such choices.	
Accommodation	Verity develops a list of questions, such as “is anyone going to ask me questions on this?” “Am I expected to explain to others what this reading is about?”, “is this just for my enjoyment?”. She then uses these questions to decide on a reading strategy.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Level Three: Writing

Learner Profile	Verity doesn't like to write anything but short notes. She knows as a nurse she will have to write reports. She also knows at college she will have to write essays. She knows the grammar rules and spells well, but she just can't seem to get her thoughts down. She needs to find a way to improve her writing.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>"I didn't know that there were patterns to different kinds of writing. Now I am developing a set of those patterns for different reasons to write. I never thought much about it, but a report is different from an essay or a story. I feel so much better and it's so much easier. I'm writing more every day."</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To write at level three to pursue her educational goal.	
Demonstration	Using a word processor, write a report on a patient who will be transferred to another nursing home, giving information on her personal habits to ease the transition. She must ask her peers at work to review it and make necessary changes.	
Skill and Level	Revises & edits work, using feedback from instructors, tutors & peers.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Verity makes one attempt to write something and usually quits. She doesn't ask others for help because she thinks they will consider what she says is "useless". She needs to develop a framework for writing and a network of colleagues to help her.	
Accommodation	Prior to writing, Verity needs to make a plan for the report listing all the issues. Then using this plan she makes a draft. After showing it to her classmates for comments, she revises it. Verity must make a list of her strengths and weaknesses in writing from their comments and use that as a means to pre-edit her work. Verity is evaluated on the framework she developed as well as the report.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Level Three: Listening and Speaking

Learner Profile	Verity has trouble focusing when given new instructions. Luckily in the nursing home, few instructions are new. She knows the routine and is really only responsible for personal care issues. She is worried about her ability to take instructions from the doctors when she becomes a nurse. She needs to be effective in taking instructions.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p><i>“I never even considered using a tape recorder. I was amazed at how much I missed. It was incredible. I feel I have a chance to succeed at school now. With some of the new technologies I will ‘catch’ all the information. Sure it’s more work but it pays off. Hard work has never been a problem for me, results have.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To listen and speak at level three to pursue her educational goal.	
Demonstration	To take notes on a lecture for new WHIMIS training at work and confirm that she has understood the changes with her supervisor at work.	
Skill and Level	Takes notes as needed.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Verity tends to “shut down” when she feels she is not following well. She then misses it all. She needs a way of retaining the information. She needs to develop good note-taking skills.	
Accommodation	Verity asks the lecturer if she can tape the talk. She then makes notes on it. At college she may tape some lectures. Some teachers will give her notes; at other times the college may provide a note-taker. At work she must find which works best for her. She investigates the possibility of adaptive technology, like voice or recording ‘blackberry’.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Level Three: Math

Learner Profile	Verity has never enjoyed math, in fact she hates it, but she did pass her courses. She gets confused so easily and guesses or estimates rather than do the work for a precise answer. She needs to ensure that she will make appropriate choices for measurement.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“It’s great how I have a way to easily decide what is exact and what is not. I knew but I never had a way to make a decision. Sometimes I was afraid I’d guess wrong. Now I know I feel so much better about it.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To do math at level three so as to pursue her educational goal.	
Demonstration	She must follow the daily activities of one of her patients. She must note which services she provides which require estimates and which require exact measurements, i.e. Milk and tea is an estimate but number of repeats of rehab exercises must be exact.	
Skill and Level	Distinguishes between estimates and precise measurements and knows when each is required.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Verity needs to consider very carefully how much precision is required in any measurement and develop a set of rules to follow. She cannot do it on an ad hoc basis.	
Accommodation	Verity must create a set of rules for determining how precise a measurement must be, related to the results of an inaccurate decision. These rules can be expanded as her job changes. She is evaluated on the set of rules she develops as well as the description she basis it on.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Luk Level Four

Luk is a 35-year-old bouncer in a local club. He wants to write music, but while he has talent he knows that he needs to take a course offered at the local college on music theory and design. There is a general education component to this course, which scared him. However now he is prepared to upgrade his literacy skills and apply. Luk loves to write but he prefers to write poetry-song lyrics. It means he never has to think about sentence structure or grammar since it is just for him. Luk has another problem -- he does not make reference to others' opinions when he speaks. It's not that he is egocentric, he just feels that in order to survive he has to focus on himself and tune others out. This makes his world very narrow. Luk was never good at math and felt that it was too confusing. He didn't understand how to use formulas; they just didn't make sense to him. Fractions, decimals, algebra all seemed dumb. Even so, he did pass in school. However when he wrote music he understood the values of notes easily.

Level Four: Reading

Learner Profile	Luk is a 35-year-old bouncer in a local club. He wants to write music, but while he has talent he knows that he needs to take a course offered at the local college course on music theory and design. There is a general education component to this course, which always scared him. Now he is prepared to upgrade his literacy skills and apply. He needs to be more critical in his appreciation of what he reads.	<p>Learner Words</p> <p><i>"I'd never used that highlighting feature. It really isolates the ideas so I can find them. Then I can draw conclusions way easier. Before I read and the information just got lost."</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To read at level four to pursue his educational goal.	
Demonstration	To read an article about the role electronic synthesisers play in the changing world of music.	
Skill and Level	Continues to make judgements and draws conclusions about ideas in written materials on the basis of evidence from the materials.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Luk tends to let things he reads "flow" over him. He now needs to learn how to interact and respond directly to specifics in the text he reads. This is hard as he has so much trouble reading. He loses his train of thought.	
Accommodation	Using a computer, Luk scans the article and highlights the issues he feels are important, then he can get a "picture" of the highlighted part and begin to develop a whole response to the article.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Level Four: Writing

Learner Profile	Luk loves to write but he prefers to write poetry-song lyrics. It means he never has to think about sentence structure or grammar since it is just for him. He needs to be able to write a variety of purposes.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“It seems so simple but just this reminder helps me to change my ways. I can use this function to watch for other problems I have. The problem was I need someone to point things out. Now I don’t need someone, the computer can do it.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To write at level four to pursue educational goals.	
Demonstration	To write an argument on why rap is a legitimate music form using the passive voice and relying on the opinion of others he has interviewed.	
Skill and Level	Communicates ideas and information for a variety of purposes (to outline an argument, to report on observations) and to specific audiences, using forms appropriate for their purpose and topic (for example: write a report for readers familiar with the issues addressed)	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Luk tends to express everything in terms of himself and how he feels. To be successful he must develop a wide variety of styles of writing. This is very hard since he feels that it is only his passion that makes written expression easy. He believes “if I don’t feel personally involved, I can’t write”.	
Accommodation	Luk sets his computer up to not recognize the word “I” whenever it comes up. He needs this reinforcement to ensure that he doesn’t slip back to his old habits.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Level Four: Listening and Speaking

Learner Profile	Luk does not make reference to others opinions when he speaks. It's not that he is egocentric, he just feels that in order to survive he has to focus on himself and tune others out. This makes his world very narrow. He needs to express opinions of others when discussing issues.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>"I know it sounds dumb but I really like this strategy. It really forces me to bring others' ideas into my work. I feel so much smarter and competent."</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To listen and speak at level four to pursue his educational goal.	
Demonstration	To give a presentation to the class on a topic of personal interest: "Royalties lost to musicians through burning CD's", using the opinions of his fellow musicians gained through interviews.	
Skill and Level	Expresses opinions, justifying them with details and evidence, supporting the argument with facts and examples.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Luk's narrow focus on his life was developed to give some control over information he takes in. It has become a strategy that is preventing him from obtaining his goal.	
Accommodation	Luk needs to constantly be required to back up what he says with an outside source. He must expand his sources of information. He learns not to hand in anything unless the number of other sources outweighs the times he says unsubstantiated ideas. He is evaluated on this.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Level Four: Math

Learner Profile	Luk was never good at math and felt that it was too confusing. He didn't understand how to use formulas; they just didn't make sense to him. Fractions, decimals, algebra all seemed dumb. However when he wrote music he understood the values of notes easily. Luk knows he needs to improve his basic and advanced math skills in order to understand the theory and science of sound production in the course he wants to take.	<p>Learner Words</p> <p><i>“Using my own words makes it real and so I remember it. Then I can do the work. Simple isn't it?”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To do math at level four to pursue his educational goals.	
Demonstration	To put into his own words, rules retaining to the measurement of sound waves.	
Skill and Level	Creates definitions of measurement concepts.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Luk cannot do something until he can explain it to himself. Unlike his peers, he can't just plug numbers into a formula with a generalized understanding. He needs to understand it before he can use it.	
Accommodation	Luk must create a description in his own words of any new math operation and rule or concept that is introduced. He must refer back to these descriptions when doing his work.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Nellie Level Five

Nellie is 21 and has ADHD. She grew up on a First Nations reserve in Northwestern Ontario but now lives with her aunt in a large city. Nellie is bright, and knows it. She was, however, unable to be successful in school. She wants to become a teacher and return home to teach kids like herself. Nellie wants to write to express herself but writing takes so long. She must rethink and reorganize often, which results in a messy page. She then is too tired to recopy it, knowing that she will want to change it as new ideas slowly evolve. She also wants to improve her vocabulary and sound more sophisticated. While Nellie is very friendly and outgoing socially, she has never been able to work in a group to produce a school project. She feels that she is best on her own. However she knows that as a teacher she must work as part of a team. Nellie did poorly in math especially when she got to algebra in school. She got so confused that she always gave up. When the teacher explained a concept she understood, but quickly became lost when she tried to do the work herself.

Level Five: Reading

Learner Profile	Nellie is 21 and has ADHD. She grew up on a First Nations reserve in Northwestern Ontario but now lives with her aunt in a large city. Nellie is bright, and even though she knows this, she has not been successful in school. She wants to become a teacher and return home to teach kids like herself. She needs to write more thoughtfully and comprehensively.	<p>Learner Words</p> <p><i>“I was always told to find a quiet place to read. I couldn’t do it. Now I know I read better in a busy noisy place or one with music. I feel I can find an environment so I can read on my own.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To read at level five to pursue her educational goals.	
Demonstration	To respond to an article on “Returning to the Three R’s”, using not only personal opinion but other evidence in a class session.	
Skill and Level	Continues to make judgements and draws conclusions about ideas in written material on the basis of evidence.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Nellie needs a lot longer time to organize her thoughts. She is often unable to finish work on time. In the past people thought that she wasn’t trying.	
Accommodation	Nellie is allowed to take as much time in class as well as in the next class to complete her assignment. On her own she finds places that provide a distraction free environment. She found reading in coffee shops much easier than at home or in class. When at home she uses her headphones, playing her favourite drum music.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Level Five: Writing

Learner Profile	Nellie wants to write to express herself but writing takes so long. She must rethink and reorganize. Often this results in a messy page. She knows that she will want to change it as new ideas slowly evolve. She is often too tired to recopy it. She also wants to improve her vocabulary and sound more sophisticated. She needs to quickly produce more academic-sounding writing.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“When I had to write it I just threw something together. Now I can use a computer to change things without working so hard. It makes a big difference. Also using a word list and thesaurus function I sound more intelligent.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	Write at level five to pursue her educational goals	
Demonstration	To write an essay on an aspect of native spirituality that uses expressive language that she would not usually use.	
Skill and Level	Uses the special terminology in a particular area of study, if necessary.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Nellie’s problems organizing information in her head means she constantly is rewriting. Also she tends to screen out a lot of what goes on around her. Therefore Nellie’s general vocabulary is lower than it should be for someone of her intelligence.	
Accommodation	As Nellie has access to a computer at home she is encouraged to use voice-activated software and then use a word processing program to organize and change what has been written. She also learns to use the thesaurus function on her computer, as well as a list of ‘native’ words she found.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Level Five: Listening and Speaking

Learner Profile	While Nellie is very friendly and outgoing socially, she has never been able to work in a group to produce a school project. She feels that she is best on her own. However she knows that as a teacher she must work as part of a team. She needs to learn to better work with a team to produce a product.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Now I understand how groups function. The model my teacher and I developed is great. It forces me to see different roles, value others work and stay in mine.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To work at level five to further her educational goals.	
Demonstration	Nellie and four other classmates have to teach the class a lesson on “Surviving City Life”.	
Skill and Level	Works with members of group to establish clear purposes and procedures for solving problems and completing projects.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Nellie tends to go off and do her own thing; her group makes complaints that she either does it all or nothing. Nellie needs to be better at developing a plan that shares the work by asking questions and building the plan with the group.	
Accommodation	Nellie’s teacher helps her develop a model for group work listing the various roles. Nellie’s teacher then coaches her on how to elicit from others what role they will play and what is missing. Nellie can use this model on her own later. Nellie is evaluated on her effectiveness of using this model.	

Organizational Demonstrations

Level Five: Math

Learner Profile	Nellie did poorly in math especially when she got to algebra in school. She got so confused that she always gave up. When the teacher explained a concept she understood it. However she quickly became lost when she tried to do the work herself. Nellie will need level five math skills to continue her education.	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Words</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“It is good to have a way to remember the order of operation that makes sense to me. Also this highlighted idea really makes a difference. Before I made so many careless errors even if I was very careful.”</i></p>
Short Term Goal	To do math at level five in order to pursue her educational goal.	
Demonstration	To correctly and independently complete a sheet of 30 algebraic simplification questions.	
Skill and Level	Understands the order of operations with brackets and exponents and applies the order of operations in evaluation expressions that involve fractions.	
Effect of the Learning Disability	Nellie never understood how to organize a math question into easier parts. She tended to do everything at once. Her weak organization skills played havoc with math.	
Accommodation	Nellie learned ‘BEDMAS’ (order of operation: b racket, e xponents, d ivision, m ultiplication, a ddition, s ubtraction) by making a personalized sentence. “Big Ed Didn’t Marry Aunt Sally”. Also she used coloured highlighters to mark + and – signs so she wouldn’t forget them. Nellie is provided with a copy of the ‘test’ sheet so she can use the highlighted one.	

LDAO Definition of Learning Disabilities (2001)

"Learning Disabilities" refers to a variety of disorders that affect the acquisition, retention, understanding, organization or use of verbal and/or non-verbal information. These disorders result from impairments in one or more psychological processes related to learning ([footnote a](#)), in combination with otherwise average abilities essential for thinking and reasoning. Learning disabilities are specific not global impairments and as such are distinct from intellectual disabilities.

Learning disabilities range in severity and invariably interfere with the acquisition and use of one or more of the following important skills:

- oral language (e.g., listening, speaking, understanding)
- reading (e.g., decoding, comprehension)
- written language (e.g., spelling, written expression)
- mathematics (e.g., computation, problem solving)

Learning disabilities may also cause difficulties with organizational skills, social perception and social interaction.

The impairments are generally life-long. However, their effects may be expressed differently over time, depending on the match between the demands of the environment and the individual's characteristics. Some impairments may be noted during the pre-school years, while others may not become evident until much later. During the school years, learning disabilities are suggested by unexpectedly low academic achievement or achievement that is sustainable only by extremely high levels of effort and support.

Learning disabilities are due to genetic, other congenital and/or acquired neuro-biological factors. They are not caused by factors such as cultural or language differences, inadequate or inappropriate instruction, socio-economic status or lack of motivation, although any one of these and other factors may compound the impact of learning disabilities. Frequently learning disabilities co-exist with other conditions, including attentional, behavioural and emotional disorders, sensory impairments or other medical conditions.

For success, persons with learning disabilities require specialized interventions in home, school, community and workplace settings, appropriate to their individual strengths and needs, including:

- specific skill instruction;
- the development of compensatory strategies;
- the development of self-advocacy skills;
- appropriate accommodations.

Footnote:

a The term "psychological processes" describes an evolving list of cognitive functions. To date, research has focused on functions such as:

- phonological processing
- memory and attention
- processing speed
- language processing
- perceptual-motor processing
- visual-spatial processing
- executive functions (eg, planning, monitoring and metacognitive abilities)

This definition is supported by a background document entitled [Operationalizing the New Definition of Learning Disabilities for Utilization within Ontario's Educational System, LDAO, 2001.](#)

Pat Hatt has worked in the field of education for over 30 years, the last 15 in Adult Literacy. Pat has an Ontario Teaching Certificate and a masters degree in Learning and Language problems. She has volunteered for the Learning Disabilities Association for over 20 years at the local, provincial and national levels, and has been on the boards of many different organizations, representing persons with disabilities. Pat has done extensive training of literacy practitioners around Ontario on how to accommodate learners with learning difficulties, and she has produced several manuals and guides.

