

Guide for Teachers Working with Students with Low Vision

During this period of physical distancing and the shift to teaching through technology, it is important to be mindful of the access needs of students with low vision. We hope that this brief guide will be useful for classroom teachers who have students with low vision in their class.

1. Consider the Learning Medium for Students with Low Vision

- Determine what format/medium the student prefers for accessing materials (e.g., large print text, electronic format, audio).
- In some instances, the subject matter will determine the best medium (e.g., math exercises cannot be rendered in audio; English studies might combine electronic text/hard-copy large print with audio).
- For teachers sending hard-copy large print (e.g., worksheets), please consider the following:
 - Black type on white background, double-spaced text is best.
 - Avoid visual clutter or distractions on handouts.
 - Avoid decorative fonts; use standard Roman or sans serif fonts, such as Arial. Consider the spacing between letters and lines.
 - Pictures accompanying any text are best reproduced in full colour and enlarged (especially important for maps).

2. Technology Considerations: Computer/Tablet Access

- Some students require the use of a computer/tablet for reading e-text materials.
 - Does the student have access to technology at home?
 - Is the student comfortable with how to use the device or is assistance required?
 - Some students, usually younger ones, will need guidance on how to manipulate the screen display; a knowledgeable adult or older sibling might be of assistance.
- If more specific guidance or instruction is required regarding the use of technology, please contact the consultant for blind/visually impaired (BVI) students who services your school division.

3. Suggestions

- Some students with low vision may need extended timelines for completing an assignment (particularly if there is a lot of text to read); consider reducing the number of questions assigned.
- Encourage the student to give feedback on the legibility of materials received.

4. Alternate Formats Collection

The production of educational and reading materials will continue throughout this period of remote learning. This includes Braille, large print, e-text, and audio. Teachers can continue to request materials in the alternate format that is best suited to the learning needs of the student. Please contact the consultant for BVI students who services your school division for information on ordering materials.

The Alternate Formats Collection will continue to send out requested materials to the student's home address. The consultant for BVI students will contact the parent to discuss delivery options (either through Canada Post or a package drop-off by the consultant).

Please contact the consultant for BVI students in your area if assistance is required.

Blind/Visually Impaired Services Unit
Inclusion Support Branch
K-12 Education Division
Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning
204-1181 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3G 0T3
T 204-945-7912 **F** 204-948-3229
www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12