Activity 7.3
Assessment Accommodations

Learning Targets for the Activity

- I can describe a method for selecting, administering, and evaluating assessment accommodations for students with disabilities.

- I can identify the types and characteristics of common accommodations used in assessment.

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to familiarize school leaders with the process for selecting and evaluating accommodations and with some common categories of accommodation methods. The purpose is *not* to equip the school leader to decide on assessment accommodations for a particular student; that decision should be made by a team of people with the relevant expertise. Rather, the purpose is to help school leaders understand the process by which accommodations are selected and what some of those accommodations might be, in order to help school leaders facilitate the provision of appropriate accommodations for students in their charge.

Time

45 minutes

Materials Needed

- Copies (electronic preferred) of *Accommodations Manual* (Thompson et al., 2005)

- Copies (paper) of Figure 7.4: "*Accommodations Manual*, Scavenger Hunt, and Thought Questions"

Suggested Room Setup

Arrange tables and chairs to accommodate a small group working in pairs and then together.

Directions

Complete each step in the order below:

1. Divide the group into pairs. Each pair works together on the scavenger hunt. Each pair works to answer the scavenger hunt questions by navigating to the designated page in the *Accommodations Manual* (15–25 minutes), retrieving and summarizing information, and noting it on the handout. Each scavenger hunt question is followed by a thought question. Pairs should discuss their answer and summarize their thoughts on the handout. Note that just discussing, without making notes, does not count as fulfilling the scavenger hunt.

2. After 20 minutes, the group reconvenes and discusses the answers to each scavenger hunt question in turn. Any discrepancies should be discussed until a consensus of understanding is reached. Time is also available to group members to share any relevant experiences they have had as each question is answered. (15–20 minutes)

Closure

The group reaches closure by facilitating a discussion based on these questions: What did I learn from this exercise/this manual that will be important for me to know in my role as a school leader? What questions do I have? With whom might I share my insights and questions? (5–10 minutes)

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FIGURE 7.4 *Accommodations Manual*, scavenger hunt, and thought questions

1. For whom is this manual designed (Thompson et al., 2005, p. 7)? Do you fall into any of the intended user groups?

2. What are the five steps to follow for selecting, administering, and using accommodations in assessment and instruction (p. 7)? Why do you think assessment and instruction are considered together?

3. Into what four categories are assessment accommodations typically placed (p. 14)? Without looking further into the manual, can you think of an example in each category?

4. What is the difference between accommodations and modifications (p. 15)? Why does the manual caution against using modifications unless specifically prescribed?

5. Review fact sheets 1 through 4 (pp. 25–37). For each category of accommodations (presentation, response, setting, and timing/scheduling) identify the accommodation with which you are least familiar. It may be a new idea for you, or it may be something you have heard of but never seen in practice.

6. Review fact sheet 5 (pp. 38–42). Select one or more sections (based on student characteristics), and look at the potential accommodations listed in the last column (Accommodations to Consider for Assessments). For each selected accommodation give at least one reason why that accommodation allows access to the assessment but does not change the construct (the learning domain) that is assessed.