
Glossary

Accommodations	Techniques and/or materials which legally must be allowed or provided to individuals with disabilities to complete school or work assignments with greater ease and effectiveness. Examples include spell checkers, tape recorders, and extra time for completing assignments.
Advance organizer	Concise overview or summary of a larger body of information that is used to gain prior knowledge before reading or listening to the larger body of information.
Assistive technology	Equipment that enhances the ability of individuals with LD to be more efficient and successful. Examples include use of an overhead projector by a teacher and use of computer grammar checkers.
Attention deficit disorder (ADD)	A disorder characterized by severe and persistent difficulties in one or more of the following areas: attention, impulsivity, and motor behaviors. These difficulties can lead to learning and behavior problems at home, school, or work.
Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)	ADD with hyperactivity, or excessive and exaggerated motor activity.
Auditory	Having to do with the sense of hearing.
Auditory discrimination	The ability to differentiate between speech sounds.
Auditory memory	The ability to remember information which has been presented orally.
Auditory perception	The ability to recognize sounds.

Automaticity	Automatic and correct responses to stimuli without conscious effort.
Basic skills	The fundamental academic skills related to reading, writing, listening, and mathematics that must be mastered for an individual to be successful in daily living tasks.
Best practice	Making good decisions about how best to help an individual learn.
Cognitive skills	Skills that are used for thinking, comprehending, analyzing, or evaluating.
Connected instruction	A key principle of LD-appropriate instruction, involves showing the adult how information in and between units and lessons is linked to learning and to the adult's goals.
Content mastery approach	Teaching method wherein the learner receives intensive instruction in topics that are needed for daily living, such as obtaining insurance, getting a driver's license, doing taxes, and procuring health care services.
Coping strategy	A method or behavioral strategy that helps an individual succeed despite learning or other disabilities.
Critical content	Specific information that the learner needs to master for a given task, such as the skills needed to pass a driver's test.
Critical questions	Questions that the instructor should pose that will lead to discourse on learning and help the learner identify goals.
Cue-Do-Review	To help ensure learning, the teacher should CUE the learner, explaining the level of instruction, DO the activities in partnership with the learner, and REVIEW the learning at the end of each level.
Decoding	A process of recognizing unfamiliar written words by sequentially segmenting the sounds represented by the letters of the word and then by blending the sounds into a meaningful word or syllables which are then combined into words.
Diagnosis	Confirmation of the existence of a condition by someone qualified to reach such a conclusion. For example, a licensed psychologist can make a diagnosis of a learning disability.
Diagnostic tests	An aid to assessment that yields information concerning the learner's weaknesses in areas such as reading or math; composed of several parts, including personal history and psycho-educational tests.

Direct instruction	A key principle of LD-appropriate instruction, characterized by high rates of teacher control during initial stages of information acquisition followed by careful performance monitoring as the learner gradually assumes control over application. Instruction is structured, modular, and sequential (simple to complex and concrete to abstract). Direct instruction stresses practice and mastery, and provides a high level of success experiences and positive feedback to the student.
Dyscalculia	Difficulty in performing mathematical functions, reasoning, word problems, or in aligning columns of numbers or distinguishing numbers or operational symbols such as + (plus sign) and – (minus sign).
Dysgraphia	Difficulty in writing well, as marked by slow writing rate, limited vocabulary, poor grammar, poor sentence structure, incorrect use of punctuation, poor penmanship, or trouble organizing and sequencing ideas on paper.
Dyslexia	A specific language-based disorder characterized by problems in learning to read, write, and spell.
Dysnomia	Difficulty in remembering names or other words that are needed for oral or written language.
Encoding	In spelling, a process by which students segment sounds of a word, translate each phoneme into its corresponding letter, and then spell the word. Encoding requires predictable sound–symbol correspondences and phonic generalizations (spelling rules).
Enduring instruction	A key principle of LD-appropriate instruction, involves acknowledging and committing the time necessary to ensure that the information is mastered by the learner and used to increase success in life.
Evaluated instruction	A key principle of LD-appropriate instruction, involves adapting instruction based on assessing the adult’s progress and response to previous attempts at instruction.
Explicit instruction	A key principle of LD-appropriate instruction, involves providing detailed explanations and models about how to approach, think about, perform, and evaluate learning and performance.
GED tests	General Educational Development Tests: five tests in the areas of writing skills, social studies, science, interpreting literature and the arts, and mathematics; successful completion of these tests results in the award of the high school equivalency diploma.

Generalizable instruction	A key principle of LD-appropriate instruction, involves using activities before, during, and after information has been mastered that ensures continued application of the information by the learner to increase life success outside of the literacy setting.
Graphic organizer	Visual depiction of the organization of information used to enhance the comprehension of information. Graphic organizers can be used in advance, during, and/or after presentation of information.
Hyperactivity	Excessive or exaggerated motor activity, as evidenced in an individual's inability to sit still.
Impulsivity	Acting on impulse with no prior consideration of the consequences of one's actions.
Incidence	The number of new cases occurring in a population during a specific time interval
Independent practice	The learner works independently or with other learners to practice new skills or strategies.
Individualized education plan (IEP)	A specifically tailored program designed to meet the distinctive needs of students diagnosed with a disability.
Informative instruction	A key principle of LD-appropriate instruction, involves making sure that adults learn how they are being taught, what is expected during the instructional situation, and how they can improve learning and performance.
Instructional adaptation	Alternative techniques and/or materials that are provided for an individual by a literacy practitioner to increase the effectiveness of instruction.
Integration	The process in which the brain groups, organizes, reserves, and reconstructs information.
Intensive instruction	A key principle of LD-appropriate instruction, involves maintaining a high degree of learner attention and response during ongoing instructional interactions that are scheduled as frequently and as close together as possible.
Kinesthetic	Learning by doing.
Laterality	A complete awareness of both sides of the body.

Learning disability	A variety of neurological disorders, including differences in one or more of the basic processes involved in understanding or using spoken or written language. Learning disabilities are lifelong conditions that are not related to visual or auditory deficiencies. Learning disabilities are not the result of delays in mental development.
Learning modalities	The means through which information is perceived, such as visual, auditory, or kinesthetic means.
Learning strategies	How a person approaches learning; includes how a person thinks and acts before, during, and after a task and how a person evaluates the impact of the strategy on learning and performance
Learning styles	The learning process that uses one's preferred modality (visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic).
Literacy	An individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, and to communicate and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society, and to achieve one's goals and develop one's knowledge and potential.
Metacognition	The ability to perceive or gain awareness about one's own thoughts or learning process and, acting upon this awareness, to choose appropriate learning strategies.
Mnemonic	Pertaining to memory.
Mnemonic device	A method of remembering information by linking key information to a word or phrase that reminds the learner, such as using the word GAIN to help a person remember the routine for mailing a package: Gather materials, Address envelope, Inspect address for accuracy, Notify mailroom to pick up package.
Morpheme	The smallest unit of meaning in a word, including prefixes, root words, and suffixes. They can be free-form (as in the word pin) or bound (as in the s in pins).
Multisensory learning	An instructional approach that combines auditory, visual, and tactile elements into a learning task. Moving one's finger under each syllable of a word as the word is read and sounded out would be multisensory learning.
Norms	Standard test scores generally based on a national cross-section of representatives.
Orthography	The total writing system of spoken language. The term also refers to the established spelling rules of a written language.

Perception	A process involving the reception, selection, differentiation, and integration of sensory stimuli. The teacher of dyslexics must teach the student to attend actively and consciously to aspects of the perception process until it becomes automatic.
Phoneme	The smallest unit of speech that serves to distinguish one utterance from another in a language or dialect (as in the /b/ of bat and /m/ of mat). English is made up of 44 phonemes.
Phoneme awareness	Awareness of the phonological structure of words is exemplified by the ability to manipulate or separate the sounds within words (e.g., which sounds come first or last; which words rhyme; which sounds are the same or different), implying metalinguistic knowledge.
Phonemic segmentation	The process of sequentially isolating the speech sounds which comprise a spoken word or syllable.
Phonetics	The study of speech sounds, how they are produced (articulatory phonetics), how they are perceived (auditory phonetics), and what are their physical properties (acoustic phonetics).
Phonics	A teaching approach that gives attention to letter–sound correspondences in the teaching of reading and spelling. Phonics is a teaching approach and should not be confused with phonetics.
Phonological awareness	Speech sound awareness is the conscious awareness of the sounds of language; the ability to reflect on the sounds in words separate from the meanings of words.
Phonology	The sound system of a language; the part of grammar which includes the inventory of sounds and rules for their combination and pronunciation; the study of the sound systems of all languages.
Process-sensitive instruction	A key principle of LD-appropriate instruction, involves reshaping the activities within the instructional sequence to take into consideration various cognitive barriers that might inhibit learning.
Reliability (of tests)	The accuracy or precision of a measurement instrument; consistency among measurements in a series.
Remediation	The repeated instruction of skills not learned in the usual time or the usual manner.

Screening instrument	Initial test(s) in a sequence of tests; usually quickly administered. The results are used to determine whether further testing is necessary and possibly to guide the selection of other tests to be administered.
Screening process	A process of collecting information through a variety of sources over time that would lead to the conclusion that an individual might be significantly at risk for a specific condition such as a learning disability
Self-advocacy	The ability of individuals with learning disabilities to explain their disabilities effectively, to request legal accommodations, and to act independently.
Structured instruction	A key principle of LD-appropriate instruction, involves systematically teaching information that has been chunked into manageable pieces
Syllabication	Breaking a word into its syllables.
Tactile	Relating to the sense of touch; tactile learning is learning by touching.
Think aloud	A metacognitive strategy in which the teacher or tutor models thinking, describing thoughts, as he/she reads the text or completes a task.
Validity (of tests)	Indication that the instrument really measures what it claims to measure.
Visual	Of or relating to the sense of vision.
Visual discrimination	Assuming normal visual acuity, the ability to distinguish slight differences in stimuli, especially in letters and words, which have graphic similarities.
Visual perception	The ability to recognize visual stimuli. Individuals with this learning disability may have problems with such activities as reading, writing, tracking, recognizing people or items, or reading a map or graphic display.
Word attack skills	The ability to decode words using knowledge of the sound–letter correspondence of the language.
Word decoding	A process used to identify words through sounding out letters, letter patterns, or blended sounds.