



Using Assistive Technology to Adapt the Classroom for Students with Special Needs

Category: Special Education

Workshop Overview

Following is a general overview of this workshop, including desired participant outcomes, an explanation of the workshop’s alignment with Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning, and resources that are included in print and electronic form.

Category: Special Education

Duration: Full workshop – 3 hours

Desired Outcomes:

Participants will...

- Explain the goal and purpose of assistive technology (AT) for students with disabilities.
- Describe the different levels of assistive technology.
- Apply best practices in using assistive technology in the classroom.

Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning:

- **Learning Communities:** Occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.
- **Leadership:** Requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.
- **Resources:** Requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.
- **Data:** Uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.
- **Learning Designs:** Integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.
- **Implementation:** Applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long term change.
- **Outcomes:** Aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

Resources in This Binder:

- Handouts
 - Handout 1: Microswitch Design Checklist
 - Handout 2: Assistive Technology Integration Plan
 - Workshop Agenda
 - Attendee Notes
 - 3-2-1 Evaluation Form
 - Certificate of Completion
- “Think About It” Exercise
- Ready, Set, Go Planning Activity





Topic Outline

Understanding the general flow of topics to be covered is an important part of giving a strong presentation. This allows the presenter(s) to lead effective group discussions and speak extemporaneously. Following are the main topics covered in this PowerPoint presentation. As you prepare to give the workshop, you may want to refer to this page often.



Main Topics:

1. Introduction to Assistive Technology
2. Levels of Technology
3. Manipulating Technology
4. Integrating Assistive Technology into the Classroom

Subtopics:

1. Introduction to Assistive Technology

- a. Purposes and Goals of Assistive Technology
- b. The Law and Assistive Technology

2. Levels of Technology

- a. No Technology Assistance
- b. Low-Level Technology
- c. Medium-Level Technology
- d. High-Level Technology

3. Manipulating Technology

- a. Environmental Controls
- b. Microswitches
- c. Touch Activated Microswitches
- d. Using Microswitches in the Classroom
- e. Student Characteristics to Consider
- f. Environmental Control Toolboxes

4. Integrating Assistive Technology into the Classroom

- a. Consideration
- b. Steps to Successful Integration
- c. Integration

Presentation Outline



This outline is designed for you to see the PowerPoint presentation at a glance. Note that slide numbers and the approximate amount of time needed per slide are shown in the right two columns. **The times in bold print show the approximate total time needed for that topic, which includes the approximate times for the activities, shown in parentheses.** You might consider keeping this page within reach during the presentation.

Section of Presentation	Slide #	Timing (mins)
Getting Started		
Introduce self, co-teacher, participants	1-2	
Explain materials issued to participants		
Cover objectives (from Workshop Overview)	2	5
Topic 1 – Introduction to Assistive Technology	3-7	25
Activity – Brainstorm	5	(15)
Topic 2 – Levels of Technology	8-14	35
Activity – Problem Solving	13	(25)
Break		
Topic 3 – Manipulating Technology	15-24	55
Activity – Designing Juan’s Microswitch	24	(30)
Topic 4 – Integrating Assistive Technology into the Classroom	25-29	40
Activity – AT Integration Plan	29	(30)
Closing Thoughts	30	5
Total of 2 hours and 45 minutes (not including break)		

Helpful tip!


This workshop can be broken up into shorter sessions so that you can adapt the presentation according to your time constraints.

Slide 9

PDXPERT **LEVELS OF TECHNOLOGY**

No Technology Assistance

- Labels.
- Highlighters.
- Sticky notes.
- Magnetic letters.
- Letter stencils.
- Clip boards.
- Wikki Sticks®.



THE MASTER TEACHER

There is a misconception that all assistive technology is computerized, expensive, and requires extensive training to use. But, there are several levels of assistive technology.

The simplest form of assistive technology is called “no tech.” This includes using everyday objects in a different way.

Consider how almost everything in a kindergarten classroom is labeled, including the carpet, desks, chairs, and cabinets, to help students relate printed words to objects. You can use the same concept in a high school science lab. For example, label the drawers and cabinets so students know where items are stored. This also is a good way to teach vocabulary and spelling.

In addition, you can use simple products such as clipboards, dry-erase boards, and tactile boundaries such as Wikki Sticks® to organize material for your students.

You can obtain many of these products at an office supply or teachers’ resource store.



“Think About It” Exercise



Have staff complete this exercise to begin implementing what they learned during the workshop. Distribute this document to staff by attaching the file to the Next Day Follow-Up Email, or make copies for the staff.

1. Describe assistive technology that is currently being used in your school or classroom. What are the changes you want to make based on what you have learned in the professional development workshop?

2. Are there any aspects of assistive technology that the workshop did not cover? What are they, and how do you propose to handle these aspects?

3. How can you integrate assistive technology into your classroom curriculum?
