

## The A-Z of Adapting Books for Students with Disabilities

### **A: ADAPT! Great overall resources for literacy and adapting books:**

1. [www.inclusive.net/resources/units/unit1/unit1\\_contents.shtml](http://www.inclusive.net/resources/units/unit1/unit1_contents.shtml)
2. <http://aacintervention.com/litboards.htm> by Lori Tuffe/Julie Maro
3. <http://boston.k12.ma.us/teach/technology/emmanuel/ModifyingBks.pdf> 15 pages of book ideas
4. [www2.edc.org/NCIP/tour/r-lit\\_EmergentLit.html#anchor988614](http://www2.edc.org/NCIP/tour/r-lit_EmergentLit.html#anchor988614) Extensive NCIP emergent literacy
5. <http://aac.unl.edu/csl/pre.html> Literacy research, extensive AAC information
6. [www.callier.utdallas.edu/ACT/res.html](http://www.callier.utdallas.edu/ACT/res.html) Callier Center AAC Literacy Project
7. <http://aac.unl.edu/csl/litdev.html> Research studies for literacy and AAC

**B: Bookworm-** The AbleNet BookWorm provides a simple way for students with disabilities to "read" their favorite books [www.ablenetinc.com](http://www.ablenetinc.com) \$239. Enabling Devices is now making their own version and it sells for \$105 at <http://enablingdevices.com/viewimage.aspx?id=748>

**C: Classic Book Adaptations-** Free books on audiotape/CDs are available from state libraries (NC Library for the Blind/ Physically Handicapped <http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/lbph/lbph.htm>.) Textbooks are sometimes available on CD upon request from the publisher for older students or you can receive the book in a spiral version vs. a bound version at times. Also consider use of OCR (optical character recognition) for older students with reading difficulties as text can be placed on a scanner and read out loud to the student or text can be edited on the screen with such programs as Kurzweil 3000 [www.kurzweil.com](http://www.kurzweil.com) or WYNN [www.freedomscientific.com/WYNN/products.asp](http://www.freedomscientific.com/WYNN/products.asp)

**D: Don Johnston (DJ), Edmark (E), Intellitools (I) (electronic book, reading instruction software sources) :** **DJ:** Start to Finish, Storytime Tales, and UNKANDU Reading Series of books, [www.donjohnston.com](http://www.donjohnston.com) **E:** Edmark Reading Program- teaches beginning reading and language development to nonreaders and those who have been unsuccessful using other programs, is switch accessible. In print or in a software version from [www.edmark.com](http://www.edmark.com) **I:** Intellitools Reading: Balanced Literacy (K-2) provides sequential instruction and adapted access

**E: Engineering the Classroom:** Excellent way to structure the classroom for language and literacy success based upon the books by Goosens, Elder and Crain (see Mayer Johnson reference below). For some of the following sources, you will need Boardmaker. Websites with ideas/ free aided language simulation boards:

1. <http://speech.jpss.k12.la.us/aac.htm> Jefferson Parish Public Schools
  2. [http://www.hummingbirded.com/popular\\_books.html](http://www.hummingbirded.com/popular_books.html) Ideas for popular books
  3. <http://lserver.aea14.k12.ia.us/atteam/at/al.html>
  4. [www.bcps.k12.md.us/boardmaker/adapted\\_library.asp](http://www.bcps.k12.md.us/boardmaker/adapted_library.asp) Over 500 books already adapted with PCS symbols with Boardmaker. Can use as a board or cut up and place in books.
- Excellent resource books are available from Mayer Johnson [www.mayerjohnson.com](http://www.mayerjohnson.com), such [Communication Displays for Engineered Preschool Environments Books I and II](#) or [Engineering Training Environments for Interactive, Augmentative Communication](#) or [Units, Quick Tech Readable Repeatable Stories and Activities](#)

**F: Fluffers:** ways to make book pages easier to turn: glue Popsicle sticks to pages at varying intervals (slender or broad sticks or "spoon" shaped), use clips (binder, banker, butterfly, barrettes, large paper clips or plastic colored ones), glue on foam pieces, cut pieces of adhesive backed weather stripping, hot glue blobs of glue on pages to build up, use of carpet furniture protector felt circles, Velcro circles, Velcro circles with use of child-proof door knob protector to attach to pages and turn. Sources for adapting:

1. <http://www2.edc.org/NCIP/tour/r-lit-books-access.html>
2. <http://atto.buffalo.edu/registered/ATBasics/Populations/LowTech/WATIRReadingBooks.pdf>

## **G: Give Aways**-free sources for books, PECS, or ways to adapt books

1. <http://www.creativecommunicating.com/freebies.html> Great free listing of stuff!
2. [www.bcps.k12.md.us/boardmaker/adapted\\_library.asp](http://www.bcps.k12.md.us/boardmaker/adapted_library.asp) Over 500 adapted books!
3. [www.sbcss.k12.ca.us/sbcss/specialeducation/ecthematic/software.htm](http://www.sbcss.k12.ca.us/sbcss/specialeducation/ecthematic/software.htm) free software for units
4. [www.billybear4kids.com/story/books.htm](http://www.billybear4kids.com/story/books.htm) Personalize to print out or read at computer
5. [www.starfall.com/n/level-a/index/play.htm?f](http://www.starfall.com/n/level-a/index/play.htm?f) free books for reading instruction
6. <http://www.niteowl.org/kids/index.html> free nursery rhyme graphics can import

**H: Hard of Hearing or Deaf Students Literacy Suggestions:** adequate lighting so that teacher's face/lips can be seen, use body language and natural gestures, check hearing aids, keep interpreter beside teacher, sign key words, introduce book in 1:1 before group activity, vary pitch and intonation of voice, use Sign Language Boardmaker symbols to add text to books. <http://www.ec-link.org>

## **I: Intellipics or other Authoring Tools such as PowerPoint or Build Ability**

**(Don Johnston)** : develop your own stories that can be adapted to work with a simple mouse click or switch activation or that are "talking books" or personalized books for the class field trips, etc. Sources:

1. [http://www.everhart.leon.k12.fl.us/assist\\_tech\\_resources.htm#talking\\_books](http://www.everhart.leon.k12.fl.us/assist_tech_resources.htm#talking_books) : Free talking book template
2. <http://atto.buffalo.edu/registered/Tutorials/talkingBooks/tbookppoint.pdf> Very nice 34 page reference
3. [www.intellitools.com/](http://www.intellitools.com/) go to Activity Exchange for 248 activities for use with their various software
4. [www.donjohnston.com/catalog/catalog.htm](http://www.donjohnston.com/catalog/catalog.htm) BuildAbility info, sample stories on website as well

**J: Just Grandma and Me** ([www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) and other software companies) and other software from Broderbund's line of Living Books. Instant Access to Living Books are set-ups for children with disabilities who need switch access, \$90 from [www.intellitools.com](http://www.intellitools.com). Of course, a well-positioned mouse placed on the turn page cursor in these stories will work like a switch to turn the pages.

**K: Kits:** Compile your own "book bags" or book boxes with actual or representative objects from the stories. Check out dollar stores, garage sales, the Goodwill, your children's old toys, etc. to put these together. Get 33 large Literacy Kits on loan in NC from **Tadpole Generations** <http://www.tadpole.org> they will ship to/from you without charge! They also have many mini-literacy kits, individual books (adapted or not) and some special needs software (not a lot). The best source of adapted software in NC for loan is through the **Carolina Computer Access Center** <http://ccac.ataccess.org/services.shtml#library>. For a small yearly fee, families and professionals can check out a wide variety of software that includes literacy software from this ATA Alliance Center <http://www.ataccess.org/>. **The North Carolina Assistive Technology Program** can help supply short term loans of various low and high tech AAC devices you may like to try with your literacy groups <http://www.ncatp.org> . Contact the local regional center for details.

**L: Language and Literacy Levels:** Adapting a book for the literacy level of the child or adult is important. The use of VOCAs as noted below and mini communication boards are important for children at the beginning stages of literacy for interaction, modeling, and independence. These mini communication or "Aided Language Simulation Boards" can be provided as a generic storytelling board or with more story specific. This is described in the Engineering the Preschool Classroom book by Goosens-Crain-Elder noted previously from Myer Johnson. Icons can be placed on the page of text simplifying the text or on a carpet square as well. Icons can be made with **Boardmaker** ([www.mayerjohnson.com](http://www.mayerjohnson.com)) or **Minspeak Symbols** <http://www.prentrom.com/teaching/teaching.html> or for the visually impaired students this is a method using a tactile objects system [http://www.tsbvi.edu/Education/vmi/tactile\\_symbols.htm](http://www.tsbvi.edu/Education/vmi/tactile_symbols.htm) Tactile symbols directory . Many sources note the need to color-code the symbols using what is known as the Fitzgerald Key when formulating and completing these boards. This grammatical categorical guide from left to right: miscellaneous words, verbs, descriptors, prepositions, and nouns. The color guide using transparent highlighters is: verbs (pink), descriptors (blue), prepositions (green), nouns (yellow) and miscellaneous (orange). There are addendums

available from Mayer Johnson that can color code these prior to printing your own boards. Bottom Line: Having black and white communication icons is better than no icons at all!

1. <http://aac.unl.edu/yaack/d2c.html#d2c0> GREAT website for AAC topics in general.
2. [www.donjohnston.com/catalog/catalog.htm](http://www.donjohnston.com/catalog/catalog.htm) Beginning literacy framework PDF, 15 pages

**M. Motor**-Angle books on book holders or on top of 3 ring binders for better viewing (use non-slip mat to secure to binder). Attach books to carpet squares using a strip of Velcro or two pieces of ribbon attached with strong tape to the back of the square (one around each cover of the book, front and back) to prevent the book from getting away from a student with severe motor problems. You can also use a C-clamp to hold the book (or other activities) stable. Head/Chin Pointers and mouthsticks can be used to turn pages of books when stabilized or placed in book holders for those with motor disabilities such as spinal cord injuries or cerebral palsy. There are electronic page turners, yet they are often too expensive and difficult to store and operate (one source is \$1030 [www.touchturner.com/pricing\\_info.htm](http://www.touchturner.com/pricing_info.htm))

**N: Novelty or Keepsake** Books can be written by the staff and children to include digital pictures scanned into the computer from field trips, pictures of the class, items needed for a shopping trip for a cooking activity, etc. More current topics and subjects could be adapted this way as well, such as books about favorites entertainers, holidays or weather events. Children of all ages love 'reading' personal books or those about novel subjects. Some teachers ask parents to take a small photo album and place items or pictures from weekend trips or special events in the pages to prompt conversation for news or a "My Family" book. These are great for the parents as they can quickly insert receipts, small items, pictures, etc. in the album. Can be low tech with album or make an electronic version with Powerpoint, Intellipics or other authoring program.

**O: Output- or VOCA**-vocal output communication aids allow the repeated lines or short stories to be "read" aloud by the student. These messages range from one message to many or sequenced messages. Examples: BigMack, One Step Communicator, or Step by Step Communicator from [www.ablenetinc.com](http://www.ablenetinc.com), Sequencers [www.adaptivation.com](http://www.adaptivation.com), Cheaptalk/others [www.enablingdevices.com](http://www.enablingdevices.com), Tech Talks, etc. from <http://www.amdi.net/>, Listen to Me (12 message, inexpensive!) <http://www.listentome.biz/>, Hug Me (\$9 for 10 second one message recording device!) [www.silverliningmm.com/recorder.htm](http://www.silverliningmm.com/recorder.htm)

**P: Page Protectors and Lamination**- cut bound books and place in top-loading page protectors or laminate pages using a laminator, lamination sheets or contact paper. The cost is high for many to use the laminating pouches, but the thickness of the .5 mil paper is much sturdier than that available in schools on the roll machines. Small laminators can be found for as little as \$60 on the Internet and when bought in bulk the pouches required are not nearly as expensive. When in doubt, just break out the old standard **contact paper!** A point to remember before cutting books for lamination is to number the pages in case you forget the order. Once protected by lamination or contact paper, re-bind the books by stapling (heavy duty), punching holes and attaching a metal ring or ribbon (not very easy to use for a child in this manner to turn pages if have a motor problem though) or cut holes and place in a 3-ring binder.

**Q: Quick Commercial Sources of Adapted Books** (are not free)

1. [www.adaptedstories.com](http://www.adaptedstories.com) Creative Communicating for 100.00 subscription per year
2. [www.mayerjohnson.com](http://www.mayerjohnson.com) Set of 12 Interactive stories by Beth Breakstone, \$19 each
3. [www.at-p.com/](http://www.at-p.com/) Awakening Technologies, 10 books \$10-\$19 each

**R: Repetitive Line Books:** Using repetitive phrase stories during reading time is a quick and efficient way to engage students with limited verbal skills in the literature process.

1. [www.monroe.lib.in.us/childrens/predict.html](http://www.monroe.lib.in.us/childrens/predict.html)
2. <http://aacintervention.com/repeatl.htm>
3. [www.wcoserrc.org/webpages/pdf/booklist.pdf](http://www.wcoserrc.org/webpages/pdf/booklist.pdf)

**S: Sensory:** adding textures to books for students with visual or attentional deficits through puffy paint, miniature objects, sewing items, etc. [www.connsensebulletin.com/cormierv4n5.html](http://www.connsensebulletin.com/cormierv4n5.html)

**T: Transparencies-**Some teachers with very low functioning children have taken pictures of the pages of books, had the picture made into slides and then had the class "read the story" using a projector, the Powerlink [www.ablenet.com](http://www.ablenet.com) and a switch.

**U: Units-** Use books to reinforce whatever unit the class is working on, be it animals or colors, etc.

1. <http://tobey.ushaonline.net/index.html> Tobey website funded by a Christa McAuliffe Fellowship grant with extensive units for 12 units. Includes Boardmaker files/extensive activities, songs, cooking ideas, etc.
2. [www.sbcss.k12.ca.us/sbcss/specialeducation/ecthematic/index.html](http://www.sbcss.k12.ca.us/sbcss/specialeducation/ecthematic/index.html) San Bernardino Schools, 11 units
3. <http://schou.sd41.bc.ca/district/boardmaker.htm> Burnaby School, 8 units

**V: Vision Impairment Literacy Suggestions:** To adapt books for visually impaired or blind students: place small object on front cover to represent the book (a bear for The Three Bears, etc.), cue orientation of book by cutting off upper right angle of pages, outline graphics with dark marker or puffy paint, add textures or "smells" to books, add Braille to book along with print (commercially available for make own with a Braille labeler), enlarge pictures and text as needed, consider room lighting, avoid clutter, provide concrete objects or props in to "book bag" to hold while reading stories. If using Boardmaker symbols, consider coloring the background black and leaving the figure fluorescent yellow.

1. <http://home.earthlink.net/~deedaze/braille.html> Reading resources for parents/teachers
2. <http://www.tsbvi.edu/Education/vmi/objectbook.htm> Object Book info and wealth of other ideas from the fantastic resource, Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired
3. <http://www.tsbvi.edu/Education/vmi/box.htm> Story box ideas
4. [http://www.tsbvi.edu/Education/vmi/tactile\\_symbols.htm](http://www.tsbvi.edu/Education/vmi/tactile_symbols.htm) Tactile symbols directory
5. [www.educ.ttu.edu/slate/ParentBook/Adapting.htm](http://www.educ.ttu.edu/slate/ParentBook/Adapting.htm)

**W: Writing with Communication Symbols-** Adapt books, make AAC boards, label room and objects easily 1. Writing with Symbols (\$199 Windows only) or Boardmaker (\$299) [www.mayerjohnson.com/main/index.html](http://www.mayerjohnson.com/main/index.html) 2. Picture It (\$295) [www.slatersoftware.com/pit.html](http://www.slatersoftware.com/pit.html)

**X: X-tra copy-**With some book adaptations you must buy a second copy of the book to cut it out, place tag or cardboard behind the page to increase the "firmness" of the page, place the page in sheet protectors and then place in a 3 ring binder. You can also scan and print a copy of the book page as well, yet this can be expensive with printer ink costs.

**Y: Young:** No child is ever too developmentally young to be read to and with some of these modifications; even the youngest developmentally involved student can interact and experience the love of books. Sources to support this concept:

1. <http://www.creativecommunicating.com/tt2.html>
2. [www.air.org/TECHIDEAS/Final%20Report.pdf](http://www.air.org/TECHIDEAS/Final%20Report.pdf) "Synthesis on the Use of AT with Infants and Toddlers" by the Department of Education, 150 pages

**Z: Zipper Pull** or ponytail holder for books with hidden objects under flaps

**Bottom Line:** Books should be adapted for motor, language, vocal output, vision, and hearing supports to allow equal opportunities for literacy development...Who should do this? Teachers, therapists, parents or other family members, friends, volunteers, service clubs or youth groups with guidance and materials provided. Start small and try to adapt 2 books for each class and build from there. Low tech may be faster and more readily available than higher tech solutions requiring knowledge of authoring software development. Money? Can use current classroom books, recycle your own children's old books, garage sales, flea markets, \$1 stores, write a mini-grant, Amazon.com sells used books and so does Barnes and Noble [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com)