



Understanding and Supporting Reading and Literacy

Basic access to general curriculum depends upon strong reading and writing skills therefore, literacy instruction and support is critical to the educational success of all students, including those with disabilities. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) means higher expectations and greater accountability for schools and students with disabilities. In addition to promoting access to the general curriculum, IDEA 2004 emphasizes the important role that parents play as partners in the education of their children because parental involvement is positively related to the educational success of students.

Individual Education Programs (IEPs) require that schools measure both academic and functional performance and use peer-reviewed research, to the extent feasible. Fortunately, recent advances in literacy and brain research have validated effective methods to teach literacy skills to children. Literacy skills are imperative to achieving access to the general curriculum for special education students. Computer-based and web-based instruction is becoming more commonplace today and is allowing effective curriculum and learning tools to be more accessible. Assistive technology has increased the accessibility to these new curriculums and learning tools for everyone. By using these tools to gain literacy skills, individuals with disabilities can have a greater access to success.

LiteracyAccess Online

In response to the need for literacy instruction for children with disabilities, PEATC has worked with George Mason University's Helen A. Kellar Institute for Human disAbilities and the Instructional Technology Program to develop LiteracyAccess Online (LAO). LAO provides research-based literacy strategies and tools that help facilitators (parents, tutors, teachers, and other interested individuals) work with children to become better readers. LAO...

- Complements research-based reading instruction by embedding a balanced reading strategy for inclusion in reading instruction,
- Provides universal access for students who have had limited access to literature,
- Supports motivation of students who have been frustrated with reading instruction and learning activities,
- Empowers students with more choice and control about how they engage in reading,
- Promotes increased positive interaction between facilitators and children in reading,
- Provides access to assistive technology supports and literacy resources,
- Supports facilitators in selecting and utilizing content on the Internet and gearing it to individual student interest,
- Allows facilitators to assist students with creating, structuring and contributing their own reading content that can be shared with others.



Reading and Literacy Websites

Visit PEATC's website www.peatc.org to find information on reading and to link to the LiteracyAccess Online (LAO) website. The following are additional reading and literacy websites to support parents and others in their quest for solutions that will help students with disabilities become good readers.

About Reading

LiteracyAccess Online <http://www.literacyaccessonline.com/> An instructional tool for reading facilitators (parents, teachers, tutors and others) to help students learn to read.

The US Department of Education www.ed.gov has invested considerable time and effort in developing information for teachers and parents to promote student success, particularly in reading. Clicking on the "For Parents" link will bring viewers to a number of resources and publications that promote reading, math, science, and other school success.

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)

<http://www.nichd.nih.gov/crmc/cdb/reading.htm> has a number of resources, particularly related to research and reading.

Reading Rockets, www.ReadingRockets.org, offers a wealth of information and resources for educators and parents. For parents, there are print and online guides for parents in English, Spanish, Hmong and Somali. **Target the Problem!** <http://www.readingrockets.org/helping/target> is a part of the site that helps target and help with specific reading problems.

SchwabLearning.org contains information on reading and other topics for students with learning disabilities. Place "reading" in the search engine to find most current offerings.

Reading is Fundamental www.rif.org is the nation's largest nonprofit literacy organization. Materials are available in English and Spanish.

A Parent's Guide to Helping Your Child Learn to Read <http://www.nea.org/parents/learntoread.html> The National Education Association's Guide for families. The main site also has additional information on reading.

Put Reading First: Research Building Blocks for Teaching a Child to Read

<http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/PFRbookletBW.pdf> The National Reading Panel's guide for parents.

The Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA)

<http://www.ciera.org/library/index.html> is a national center for research on early reading, representing a consortium of educators from five universities. Provides useful tools and evidence-based practices.

WrightsLaw <http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/read.index.htm> Special Education Advocate and Attorney, Peter Wright's information and favorite picks for information related to reading.



For Kids

Yahooligans www.yahooligans.com , **KidsClick** www.kidsclick.org , **MSNkids** <http://search.msn.com/kidz/default.aspx?FORM=PTHM> are search engines that are specifically geared for kids and parents who are searching for appropriate information on the Internet.

Children's Storybooks Online <http://www.magickeys.com/books/index.html> Illustrated stories for young children, older children and young adults

Enchanted Learning <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/Home.html> A wealth of interesting materials to engage learners in topics from science and math to foreign language and music.

www.4Kids.org Each week www.4Kids.org appears in approximately 70 newspapers in the USA and around the world. Every issue carries a review of three kid-friendly Web sites with pictures, **Ask Amy's** Q&A column, the **Kid Quest** Challenge and a **Speak Out!** question that you can comment about on our site.

Listening to Written Text

BrowseAloud www.browsealoud.com is a free downloadable text reader that can be used for BrowseAloud enabled sites, including PEATC's.

Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic <http://www.rfbd.org/> is a membership organization that can obtain books on tape

Virginia Department of Education Resources

Reading First <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Instruction/Reading/readingfirst.html> is the Virginia-specific information related to the No Child Left Behind initiatives for kindergarten through third grade.

Additional Instructional Models/Programs to Satisfy Provisions in Standards of Accreditation <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/suptsmemos/2001/inf056.html> This is a link to a Superintendent's Memo for research-based models that work for low performing students. Attachment B includes the types of learning needs that some of the teaching/reading methods used in Virginia schools address.

Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) Instruction, Training and Assessment Materials and Resources <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Instruction/sol.html> Resources to help teachers in all SOL areas, including reading and writing.

T/TAC Online <http://ttaconline.org/> Virginia's Training and Technical Assistance Centers (T/TAC) has websites, webcourses and other resources to promote success in school and to meet Virginia SOLs and alternative tests.