Examples of Adapting the Curriculum for Students with Special Needs

The following are examples of adaptations that may assist students with special needs achieve success in science. The teacher could:

Adapt the environment

- Change where the student sits in the classroom.
- Make use of cooperative grouping
- Adapt presentations
- Provide students with advance organizers of key scientific concepts.
- Demonstrate or model new concepts.
- Adapt the pace of activities
- Allow the student more time to complete assignments
- Provide shorter but more frequent assignments

Alternate mode for materials

- Dictate to a scribe
- Tape record
- Draw pictures
- Cut pictures from magazines
- Build models
- Use the computer
- Enlarge/shrink materials
- Use overlays/acetate on text pages
- Cut and paste
- Use manipulatives
- Use a calculator

Adapt materials

- Use large print activity sheets.
- Use overlays on text pages to reduce the quantity of print that is visible.
- Highlight key points on the activity sheet.
- Line indicators
- Sections on paper (draw lines, fold)
- Different types of paper (e.g., graph, paper with mid-lines, raised line paper)
- Provide more white space to put answers
- Highlight or color code (directions, key words, topic sentences)
- Cover parts of worksheets
- Put less information on a page
- Use high contrast colors

Adapt assistance

- Use peers or volunteers to assist students with special needs.
- Use students with special needs to assist younger students in learning science.
- Use teacher assistants to work with small groups of students, as well as with an identified student with special needs.
- Use consultants and support teachers for problem solving and to assist in developing strategies for science instruction.

Adapt assessment

- Allow various ways for students to demonstrate their understanding of scientific concepts such as performing experiments, creating displays and models, and tape recording observations.
- Adapt assessment tools such as paper and pencil tests to include options such as oral tests, open-book tests, and tests with no time limit.
- Keep work samples on NCR paper.
- Use computer programs that provide opportunities for scientific practice and recording results.
- Provide opportunities for extension and practice
- Require small amounts of work to be completed at a given time.
- Simplify the way questions are worded to match the students' level of understanding.
- Provide functional everyday examples such as building structures to develop an understanding of forces. (*Ministry of education, British Columbia 2006*)