

Tasks - Motor Aspects of Writing

As a team, discuss and write down the motor aspects of writing tasks that the student needs to do.

One of the most important questions when assessing a student's need for assistive technology is: **What are the tasks the student needs to do?** Teachers require written communication in many forms including note taking, worksheets, essays, and tests. In this instance what motor aspects are required to complete the writing task? These are some questions to consider:

- What tasks are required of the student that would influence their choice of assistive technology?
- What is required in the curriculum?
- Is the majority of writing single words, fill in the blanks, sentences, paragraphs, or multiple page term papers?
- What are the daily or weekly written assignment requirements?
- Are test questions taken from lecture notes?
- If the student has difficulty taking notes are peer or teacher notes available?
- What is the format of the test? Essay, multiple choice, true/false?
- Are there pop quizzes?
- Before considering reducing the quantity of the required writing or increasing the time element, would the task be more efficient with the use of assistive technology?
- Are there aspects of the writing assignments that are “busy work” that is not specifically beneficial to increasing the student’s understanding?
- Is the student able to meet the reading requirements in order to perform the writing tasks?
- Is someone currently performing the writing tasks for the student and is the goal to make the student more independent?

Consider your student’s writing development with this typical progression of writing:

- Early Childhood four- and five-year-old kindergarten students are combining letters to write words and their name.
- Kindergarten students are combining letters to write words and their name.
- First graders are filling in worksheets and writing simple sentences.
- First through third graders practice penmanship and learn cursive handwriting. Computers are used, but not using structured keyboarding.
- By fourth grade, students are writing paragraphs and short stories as the writing demands at this stage become increasingly difficult. Computers are used and touch typing keyboarding should be taught.
- Middle school and high school students are required to do various types of writing, including extensive papers and projects as well as demonstration of competency to show what they have learned. Handwriting and keyboarding are both used.