



Adaptation of learning content for students with SLDs
Educational Needs and Adaptations for students with SLDs

Homework and home study

Introduction

A large part of the learning process occurs at home. As a teacher, you have little control over what happens at home and the situation your students are in. Homework and studying at home can be challenging, especially for students with SLDs. **It is important that your students have all the tools they need to work efficiently at home.**

The need behind this adaptation

Students with SLDs can spend 3 times longer working on homework than their peers. It can be a very frustrating and upsetting experience for them. As a result, they may be **more quickly swamped than others and**, since homework occurs at home, **this reality can remain unnoticed**. However, it is no secret that a student that is **feeling overwhelmed** is not in a good disposition to learn and may feel **unmotivated**. It is important for their development that students have

time to rest and have hobbies as well. Therefore, special care should be given to the **amount of work** students are asked to do.

In addition, students with SLDs may find it particularly hard to track time and organise their work.

The adaptations below can be beneficial for all your students by giving them **good methods to study at home**, especially as some might struggle to adapt to studying on their own as they progress through the years.

What is this adaptation all about?

How to present homework

Like for many activities, students need to **understand the goal and the relevance of what they are doing**. This is essential for them to **stay motivated**, to do the task well and, most importantly, to learn from it.

- **Explain the long-term benefits** of the homework and how it can be useful in life to help your students be more focused on the task.
- Make sure that the **evaluation or assessment process is transparent**, so that students can understand exactly what is expected from them.
- **Organise homework into small, manageable parts**, with instructions that are small and straightforward as well. This is important to allow students that need regular breaks between tasks to be able to have them.

Homework organisation and time management

It is important to remember that the **purpose of homework is for the students to practice something they already know** and covered in class, to help them retain knowledge.

- Try the “**homework buddies**” principle. The idea here is to pair a student having more difficulties (eg. SLDs) with another student. The students will then be able to help each other, and organise themselves. However, **make sure** that the student with more difficulties **doesn't feel like they are a burden** or a constraint to the other student. The

other student shouldn't feel like being punished either. They should both feel that they benefit from the situation.

- **Don't overload your students with homework.** Remember that students with SLDs take much more time to do their homework. On top of that, their schedule is generally very busy, because they often have appointments with specialists.
- Students with SLDs may have **trouble with time management** and organising their work. **Inform them of the techniques that may help them.** For instance, using a timer and adopting the “**pomodoro technique**” may increase their focus time and productivity. This technique consists of using a timer and performing periods of concentration of about 25 minutes, followed by short breaks of about 5 minutes. **This allows the student to be more productive during the periods of focus.**
- Making a “**to-do list**” of the tasks that they have to achieve, ordered by priority, may be resourceful as well. Gamified platforms for planification and organisation may help your students. You will find more information on that matter in the practice sheets “Set achievable goals and track progress” and “Gamified platforms for planification and for language learning”.

Try to understand the situation at home

It is very hard to plan good homework and study if the situation at home is unknown.

Therefore, **discussion with the parents and the students can be invaluable.** Try to have an idea of the following aspect.

- Investigate to determine if the student has a **quiet place** without distraction at home.
- Discuss **homework frequency, deadlines, the amount of work** they have to accomplish at a given moment, etc.
- Try to get a general idea of what **extra activities** your students are attending. Extra scholar activities are also important for the development and motivation of your students.
- Discuss with the parents to get an idea of the **frequency of appointments** your **students with SLDs** attend.

- If you deem it necessary, discuss remedial homework: keep in mind that you don't want to overload your students. Otherwise, remedial homework could end up being counterproductive.

Conclusion

Homework can be a powerful means to help your students practise and retain the information that they have learned. However, it can also be a disservice, especially for students with SLDs, who spend more time on their homework and may feel overwhelmed and unmotivated. Understanding the situation at home and the schedule of your students after school can be helpful to make sure that the homework is reasonable. Explaining the long-term goals and assessment process of the homework will also help the students understand exactly what is expected from them, and motivate them to achieve their tasks. Finally, discussing with your students what can help them organise their tasks and manage their time will be very useful to them.

Resources and references

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