



This guide offers suggestions for presenting **Curriculum Modifications: Special Equipment**. This in-service suite includes a PowerPoint presentation and supporting materials. Please use and adapt these materials as needed for specific audiences.

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- PowerPoint presentation (16 slides)
- Projector and audio equipment
- Learning Activity:
  - » *Access and Participation*
- Optional Learning Activities:
  - » *View and Share* (Video)
  - » *My Thoughts*
- Tips for Teachers
- Flip chart or similar large paper, and markers for writing participant ideas

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- The purpose of this presentation is to provide participants with a deeper understanding of one type of curriculum modification: *special equipment*.
- This is one in a series of in-service suites on curriculum modifications. If participants need a basic introduction to curriculum modifications before focusing on the eight general types, please reference the *Curriculum Modifications: An Introduction* in-service suite; for a brief review, reference the *Tips for Teachers* handout from that suite.
- Participants are encouraged to consider how using special equipment can increase the participation of specific children in their class.
- Learning activities offer participants opportunities to identify how to use special equipment based on the specific needs, strengths, and interests of individual children.
- Many of the examples provided in this in-service suite can support a variety of children, based on a variety of needs. Consider adapting the scenarios and supplementing with your own to fit your particular audience.
- Optional slides and learning activities are described in detail at the end of this document.

## NOTE

The *Helpful Resources* and *Tools for Supervisors* handouts are overarching tools that apply to all of the in-service suites in the Curriculum Modifications series. They can be found in the *Curriculum Modifications: An Introduction* in-service suite.



## SLIDE 1: CURRICULUM MODIFICATIONS: SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

### Introductions:

- Begin the training by giving participants background information on yourself.
- Provide an opportunity for participants to introduce themselves (where they are working, their current roles, etc.)
- Conduct an icebreaker related to using *special equipment* to promote participation.

**Example:** When have you, or someone you know, used special equipment?

### Possible answers:

- A walking stick while hiking
- A walker or cane after surgery
- A coffee cup with a lid to use while driving
- A large fitness ball to sit on while at your desk to relieve neck and back pain





## SLIDE 2: NCQTL'S FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE EVERYDAY PRACTICE

### Introduce NCQTL.

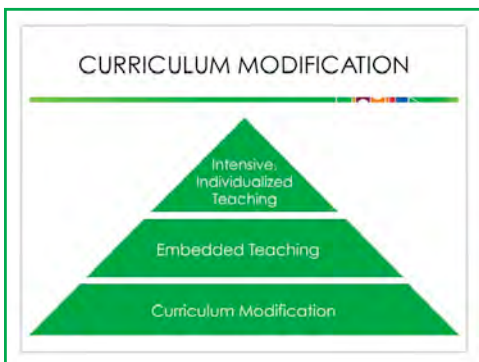
The four components of the House Framework support school readiness for all children.

After the foundation of the house is secure and all the indicators of a high-quality early childhood program are in place, there may still be children who are struggling to participate or to maximize their potential.

These children may include:

- A child who isn't making progress and needs extra support in a particular area of learning.
- A child with an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- A child who is a dual language learner (DLL).
- A child who seems to be excelling in some areas of learning and in need of more challenge.

All these children can be supported or challenged, based on their unique needs, by using the teaching strategies introduced in the roof.



## SLIDE 3: CURRICULUM MODIFICATION

The roof portion of the Framework for Effective Practice is separated into three tiers of highly individualized teaching: *Curriculum Modification*, *Embedded Teaching*, and *Intensive Individualized Teaching*. In the roof, the levels of support intensify from the bottom tier to the top.

*Curriculum Modification* is the bottom tier of the roof. This tier is about making *small* changes or additions to classroom activities that have a *big* impact on a child's engagement and learning.

This in-service suite focuses on how, with some careful planning, special equipment can be used to promote children's participation and learning.

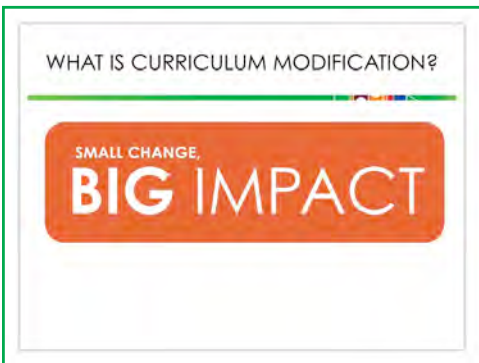


## SLIDE 4: OBJECTIVES

Objectives for the presentation:

- Define special equipment.
- Provide strategies and examples.
- Discuss application based on individual children's needs.

The last objective refers to the learning activities, which encourage participants to think about how special equipment can be integrated into the classroom curriculum to promote participation.



## SLIDE 5: WHAT IS CURRICULUM MODIFICATION?

**Definition:** A curriculum modification is a change to the classroom activity or materials in order to facilitate or maximize a child's participation in planned activities, interactions, and routines. Curriculum modifications do not significantly alter the content, scope or sequence of a curriculum.

A curriculum modification:

- Increases a child's ability to participate.
- Requires just a little extra thought or planning.
- Is easy to implement.
- Has fairly immediate impact if it's going to work.
- Does not need additional resources, in most cases.

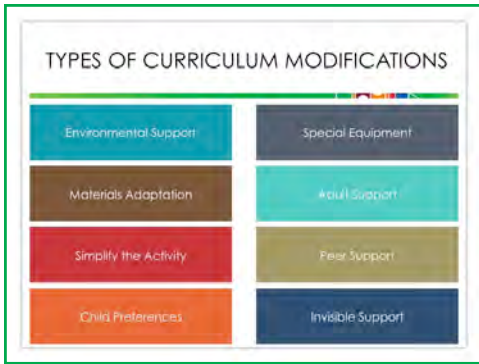
A curriculum modification is a small change that can make a powerful impact on a child's participation, sense of belonging, and opportunity to learn.

### EMPHASIZE



Children with significant needs might require special equipment or adaptive devices that necessitate extra thought, planning, and expense.





## SLIDE 6: TYPES OF CURRICULUM MODIFICATIONS

Classroom activities and routines can be modified and adapted in a variety of ways. The eight general types of curriculum modifications are:

- |                       |                          |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Environmental support | <b>Special equipment</b> |
| Materials adaptation  | Adult support            |
| Simplify the activity | Peer support             |
| Child preferences     | Invisible support        |

The focus of this in-service suite is on special equipment.

### NOTE

Some examples of the modifications in this presentation can fit into other categories *in addition* to special equipment (i.e., peer support, adult support, materials adaptation). Encourage participants to focus on children’s individual needs and interests rather than the type of modification that is being discussed.

### EMPHASIZE

Focus on the strategy that is the best fit for the child.



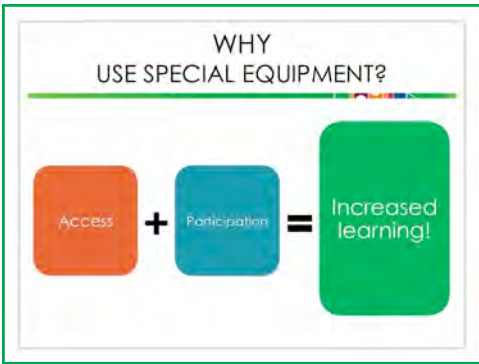
## SLIDE 7: SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

**Definition:** “Using special or adaptive devices that allow a child to participate or increase the child’s level of participation.”

Reference for definition:

Sandall, S., & Schwartz, I. (2008). *Building blocks for teaching preschoolers with special needs*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing.





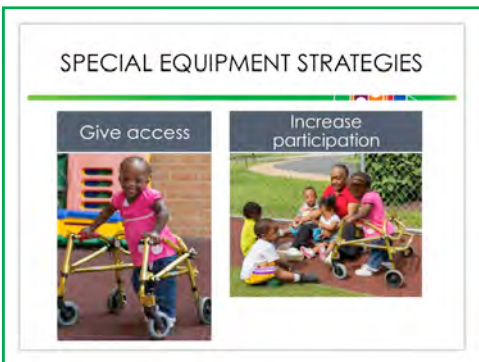
## SLIDE 8: WHY USE SPECIAL EQUIPMENT?

Teachers work hard to develop lessons that get each *individual* child *actively involved* in learning. Even with the most thoughtful lesson plans and well-structured classrooms, some children still struggle to participate or to maximize their potential. Simple modifications to the curriculum, such as using special equipment, can help these children progress.

More specifically, teachers who modify activities and materials based on individual needs and strengths ensure that children are *not bound by a single way of participating*. Successful learning can then take place in a variety of ways.

### Access + Participation = Increased Learning

- Modifications provide **access** to the planned activities, interactions, and routines.
- Increased access leads to a higher level of **participation**.
- Participating in a meaningful way provides a greater opportunity for **learning**.



## SLIDE 9: SPECIAL EQUIPMENT STRATEGIES

Without special equipment, some children may not be able to gain access or participate in many activities. Special equipment allows this toddler to walk around the track and join her peers as they play a game outdoors.



## LEARNING ACTIVITY: ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION

In this learning activity, participants determine the materials or equipment that could increase access and participation.

Ask participants to work individually, in pairs, or in groups from same organization, etc., depending on the number of participants.

### HANDOUT

Distribute the *Access and Participation* learning activity and review directions.

### DISCUSSION

Ask participants to share examples. The *Facilitator Guide* for this learning activity lists examples for discussion.



*Length of video: Approximately 1 minute and 27 seconds*

## SLIDE 10: VIDEO: USING SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

### **Introduce the video.**

This video shows the use of special equipment by three different teachers.

VIDEO 

DISCUSSION 

Ask participants for their comments on the following questions.

- What special equipment did these teachers use?
- When was it used?
- How do you think these teachers knew an adaptation was needed?
- Why did the teachers use special equipment? How did it help the child?

### **Possible answers:**

- Examples of the special equipment are: divided (cafeteria style) plate, chairs, “bumpy seats,” vibrating pencil, an iPad, and an “egg” chair.
- Teachers used special equipment at various times of the day: mealtime, circle time, signing in during arrival, and free choice.
- Teachers used their observation skills: a child who didn’t eat at mealtime, who was fidgety or non-attentive during circle. Teachers also observed children’s work—handwriting samples, for example.
- Teachers used special equipment to: maximize learning, increase engagement, increase opportunities, and increase participation.







## SLIDE 11: SPECIAL EQUIPMENT CAN BE...

Special equipment can be expensive. With creativity and planning, teachers can make or find inexpensive options.

- A child who has difficulty using a typical cup could use a cup with a lid. Another child may need a cup with a lid and a straw.
- A child with visual impairments can play a board game with a friend if sandpaper, felt, or other tactile materials are glued to game pieces.
- Children who have mobility issues can play outdoors with power toys that have remote controls.

Many states have agencies with lending libraries where teachers can borrow special equipment: toys, switches, augmentative communication devices, alternate keyboards and other computer input devices, environmental control devices, and software designed for children with special needs.



*Length of video: Approximately 1 minute and 17 seconds*

## SLIDE 12: VIDEO: SPECIAL EQUIPMENT – COLLABORATE

There are many devices on the market to assist children. Switches and other technology tools, walkers, standers, braces, and carts or wagons can increase children’s access and participation.

Collaboration between families, educators, and specialists (physicians, physical therapists, occupational therapists, etc.) is especially important when a teacher is deciding to use special equipment as a modification for a child.

### **Introduce the video.**

This interview explains the benefits of collaboration.

VIDEO 

DISCUSSION 

### **Points to highlight from the video:**

- Adaptive equipment can be used for children with significant delays.
- It’s important to work with consultants.
- Consultants help in several ways. They can:
  - » Give ideas.
  - » Provide access to special equipment.
  - » Suggest ways to creatively use what is already available.





*Length of video: Approximately 1 minute and 4 seconds*

## SLIDE 13: VIDEO: SPECIAL EQUIPMENT – EXAMPLE A

### **Introduce the video.**

This video is an example of the use of special equipment in a small group setting.

VIDEO 

DISCUSSION 

Ask participants for their comments on the following questions.

- What special equipment was used?
- How did it increase access?
- How did it increase participation?
- How did it maximize learning?

### **Possible answers:**

Examples of the special equipment in the video are:

- A wheel chair, an adaptive wooden chair with a block to separate legs, and a blue strap.
- The use of special equipment resulted in:
- Increased access by allowing the child to be at the table with peers.
- Increased proximity to materials.
- Increased participation that enabled the child to put an ice cube in the bin.





Length of video: Approximately 53 seconds

## SLIDE 14: VIDEO: SPECIAL EQUIPMENT – EXAMPLE B

### Introduce the video.

This video shows two children and a teacher during free choice after nap.

VIDEO 

DISCUSSION 

Ask participants for their comments on the following questions.

- What special equipment was used?
- How did it increase access?
- How did it increase participation?
- How did it maximize learning?

### Possible answers:

Examples of the special equipment in the video are:

- A blue foam “sitter,” blue straps around the child’s ankles—the straps help anchor ankle braces, shoulder straps

The special equipment:

- Enabled the child to be near the floor.
- Increased access to peers.
- Increased participation and interaction with peers.



## OPTIONAL

### LEARNING ACTIVITY: VIEW AND SHARE

In this activity, participants watch a video and determine how special equipment can benefit children.

NOTE 

Presenter notes for optional learning activities are located at the end of this document, after the closing slide.



## SLIDE 15: REVIEW

A curriculum modification is a small change that can make a big impact on a child's level of participation in your classroom.

Special equipment is one of eight general types of curriculum modifications. Strategies include making changes that increase access and participation.

The use of special equipment is one way a teacher can promote engagement and learning.

### HANDOUT

Distribute handouts if not distributed during presentation. Based on participant roles:

- Distribute and review *Tips for Teachers*.
- Distribute and review *Tools for Supervisors*.
- Distribute the *Helpful Resources* handout and review key resources.

### NOTE

In-service suites are available for each of the eight types of modifications. Refer to these as needed, based on your participants' understanding of curriculum modifications.



## OPTIONAL

### LEARNING ACTIVITY: MY THOUGHTS

Participants brainstorm how they can apply what they've learned to their own classrooms.

Presenter notes for optional learning activities are located at the end of this document, after the closing slide.

## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY:

### SHARE THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTION WITH PARTICIPANTS:

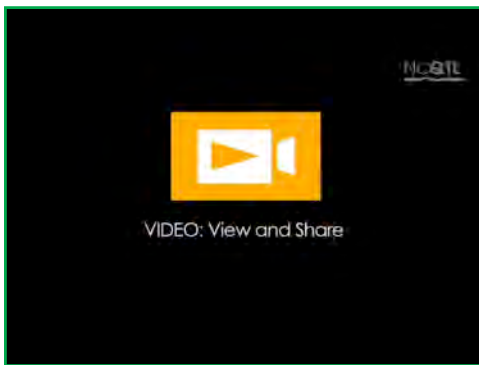
- Work with a team member from your classroom to determine which children in your class might benefit from the use of special equipment.
- Make a plan.
- Determine who will be in charge of tasks (contacting specialists, exploring special equipment available from different sources, etc.)
- Give it a try!



## SLIDE 16: CLOSING

Provide participants with NCQTL contact information and encourage them to visit our website for additional resources.

## OPTIONAL



Length of video: Approximately 1 minute and 27 seconds

### LEARNING ACTIVITY:

#### VIEW AND SHARE

*Suggested placement after Slide 14.*

In this activity, participants view a video and determine how special equipment benefits children. The video *View and Share* is found on the optional slide included with this in-service suite.

#### HANDOUT

Distribute the *View and Share* learning activity and review directions.

#### **Introduce the video.**

This video consists of two interviews with examples of curriculum modifications.

Options for completing the activity:

- Participants view the whole video while completing the handout.
- Participants view the whole video once and then complete the handout while viewing the video a second time.
- Participants view Video A, complete part A on the handout, and discuss their answers. Then they view Video B, complete the handout, and discuss their answers.

#### VIDEO

#### DISCUSSION

Complete this statement and share your answer with the person sitting in back of you:

I learned that I can use special equipment with \_\_\_\_\_  
(a child in my classroom), because \_\_\_\_\_.



## OPTIONAL



### LEARNING ACTIVITY:

#### MY THOUGHTS

*Suggested placement is after Slide 15.*

This learning activity provides an opportunity for participants to think about what they have learned from the information presented today and how they might apply it.

### HANDOUT

Distribute the *My Thoughts* handout and review directions.