# User Personas

Reading Disorder

Johnny is a student with a reading disorder. He has difficulty learning new material in a classroom and struggles when taking tests. He primarily has trouble with his inability to sound out words, which leads to a slow and laborious reading speed and difficulty recalling what he has read. To help him learn and perform in the classroom he currently requires read-aloud accommodations, simplified directions, additional time to read and take tests, and visual directions to supplement written directions. Johnny does better when directions are presented one step at a time and when each step has a representative image or visual to help him conceptualize the requirements of his task.

### Inclusion Order:

### Standard APIP Supports:

### APIP Supports in PNP:

### Accommodations in PNP:

### 3rd Party Assistive Technology:

### Sample PNP Code:

Dyslexia

Sam is a student with severe dyslexia. He is proficient with multiple assistive technology tools and performs well in advanced courses. He uses DAISY formatted textbooks with reading support software and relies on the DAISY navigation tools to find assigned reading passages. He also uses the annotation and bookmark tools to assist him with studying. Sam scans hardcopy handouts and runs OCR software to translate them into text that he can read with his assistive technology. Sam also uses free tools to support his reading needs. He saves articles and reading assignments to [*Pocket*](http://getpocket.com/)*,* so that he can change the font to a serifed font and adjust the white space and spacing between letters. These adjustments make text easier for him to read without having to use text-to-speech software. Sam is a straight-A student in advanced courses, but has difficulty with high-stakes tests because he is not able to use tools to have passages read to him or to change the font characteristics and white space. He is allowed extra time on tests, which allows him to pass, but he does not perform at the same level he performs when he is allowed to use his assistive technology tools in the classroom.

Attention Problems

Malori is student with attention problems. As a result of her inability to focus or regulate her attention, Malori often loses track of time when working on a test item. She will become distracted by other auditory or visual stimuli in the room. When she does regain focus she can become impulsive in her response choices and make numerous comission errors on tests and assignments. She will also omit answers as she moves quickly through her tasks not paying much attention to the details of the instructions or the completion of her work. Malori will then turn in her assignment or test thinking she performed well but her poor self-monitoring ability has resulted in an unrepresentative sample of her true capability.

Cerbral Palsy/Average IQ

Bobby is a student with cerbral palsy who has a moderate level of impairment related to his diagnosis. His gross motor functioning is significantly impaired. He is unable to walk and relies on his motorized wheelchair to access travel around his school and his classroom. His fine motor skills are impaired but he has enough muscle control to operate his wheelchair and press a switch to operate both a computer and a tablet. Since this student’s muscles are impaired by his CP, his speech intelligibility is reduced making voice recognition software difficult to use. Bobby does have average intelligence and a high level of content knowledge, but communicating that information to people and software systems can be frustrating for Bobby.

Emotional Disturbance - Anxiety

Felix is a 13-year-old boy in the 8th grade. He qualifies for special education services under the qualifiying condition of emotional disturbance. He is primarily affected by his high level of anxiety and frustration. His diagnosis interferes with his access to education which makes obtaining a valid measure of his content knowledge difficult. Felix becomes frustrated easily and will often throw things and have emotional outbursts when he feels like he has failed. This is exacerbated by his low self-esteem. In the classroom, he currently receives frequent positive reinforcement for displaying appropriate behaviors and remaining on task. Items are only presented to Felix at his current mastery level to prevent increased levels of anxiety. Felix always has a visual schedule so he knows what he has completed for the day and what more he needs to accomplish before he gets a break from completing tasks.



**Autism**

Brady is a 15-year-old boy diagnosed with Autism. He has deficits in expressive and receptive language which interferes with his social communication, but he performs in the average range on cognitive assessments. Brady is mainstreamed a majority of his day. He is extremely sensitive to loud noises and becomes anxious and outwardly aggressive in stressful situations. Brady’s teacher uses a daily visual schedule to help reduce his anxiety. Brady is more relaxed when he knows what task he is working on, what constitutes completing a task, and what task will be worked on next. He also does well having visual cues that let him know when he will be finished and when he will receive a break. Using visual pictures and images to communicate language is necessary because of Brady’s deficits. Directions are presented to Brady through pictoral icons that provide him with the option to make choices. When Brady makes a request of his teacher he will use an iPad application, search through images and recognizable phrases, and select an icon to help him communicate. Considerations in the classroom related to his sensitivity to excessive auditory and visual stimuli are addressed by giving Brady the ability to add or remove sounds from his environment with the use of headphones.

English Language Learner

Andrea is an 11-year-old girl who recently immigrated from Mexico. She has a difficult time comprehending verbal instructions provided by her teacher. When she asks for help she struggles with finding the right words to communicate her thoughts. When she is given a reading passage, she does not know many of the words or the context in which they are used. She may be able to figure out the main idea but the detail-oriented questions are difficult for her to understand. Writing prompts are often followed by short sentences that lack much content since Andrea struggles with finding words to represent her thoughts.

Low Vision – Albinism

Jesse is a student with Albinism, which affects his vision. He requires large print materials with a minimum font size of 24 point. He is extremely sensitive to light and wears protective lenses to shade his eyes when he is outside. He also wears these lenses inside, unless the overhead lighting can be modified or turned off. Jesse needs preferential seating, so that he can see the teacher and any instructional materials that are projected. He uses his portable CCTV with a distance camera to see materials across the room. Jesse is gifted in the areas of math and science and participates in accelerated courses for these subjects. He uses a screen magnification tool to enlarge text and images on a computer. He prefers 5x magnification, but may be able to see smaller text if his eyes are not fatigued. Due to his light sensitivity he sets the luminance color contrast to low by changing the foreground and background to colors that are easier for him to see. Depending on the content he is trying to see and how fatigued his eyes are feeling, he may have to change his color selections in order to see details.

Traumatic Brain Injury

Maggie is a student in fourth grade who sustained a head injury in a car accident before the age of two. As a result of her injury, Maggie has lost motor function on the right side of her body. She is able to walk, but her gait is unstable. She needs an adapted chair in the classroom to stabilize her trunk and provide her with the support she needs to manage her classroom materials. She is able to write with a pencil, using her left hand, but she cannot effectively secure her paper with her right hand. She also fatigues very quickly with paper/pencil tasks and is unable to complete lengthy writing assignments without the use of a computer. Maggie also has difficulty maintaining attention to task and has limited short-term memory. Teachers provide Maggie with consistant repetition in instruction and incorporate checklists and mnemonic tools to assist with memory. Maggie can complete grade-level work in all subject areas, but she relies on the use of the mnemonic supplemental aids and checklists to prompt her of the steps she needs to follow. Maggie wears noise-cancelling headphones when working independently. She also uses timers and audible reminders on her computer to help her remain on task.

Deaf – Fluent in ASL

Chris is a 6th-grade student with autosomal dominant deafness. He was fitted with hearing aides as an infant and was able to learn some speech through interaction with teachers and children in early childhood programs, but speech is not a functional form of communication for him. Both parents are deaf, so Chris is fluent in the use of American Sign Language (ASL) and he prefers ASL over speaking or writing. Due to the differences in language structure between ASL and written English, Chris has difficulty with reading and writing assignments. He is receiving bilingual services and is making progress with writing, but is still functioning below grade level. He is able to read at grade level, but he requires additional time to complete his reading assignments. When presented with captioned content on a computer, Chris often has difficulty reading in sync with the captions. He will pause and replay captioned content to compensate for his reading speed. When presented with content in ASL, Chris has a higher comprehension rate and is better able to answer comprehension questions with a higher rate of accuracy than when he has to read printed text. When allowed to provide his answers with ASL, Chris demonstrates knowledge at or above grade level in all core academics, except Language Arts.

Blind – Braille User

Debra is college-bound tenth-grader who is a proficient Braille user. She is also proficient with a variety of assistive technologies, including a screen reader and refreshable braille display on a Windows desktop computer, a Braille embosser, a talking calculator, and an iPad with iOS accessibility features, including VoiceOver. Debra is highly skilled with technology and can learn new skills quickly. When doing math assignments, Debra prefers to use hard-copy Braille, but can use a refreshable Braille display with a minimum of 32 cells. Even so, when completing assignments that include the interpretation and/or creation of graphs, Debra needs hard-copy tactile graphics and the ability to emboss the graphs she creates. Without this support, it is very difficult for her to keep up with class assignments because it takes her longer to finish the work and she has a more difficult time understanding the concepts. She also prefers tactile graphics for content such as maps or venn diagrams. Debra is currently learning how to use a talking graphing calculator that has the ability to send graphs to a Braille embosser.

Specific Learning Disability in Math (Dyscalculia)

Alex is a fifth-grade student who was recently diagnosed with a learning disability in math. He has difficulty remembering concepts related to math calculations and concepts related to time. When provided with direct instruction and repitition, Alex can complete math calculations, but without daily exposure to the same concept, he is unable to retain what he has learned and is unable to generalize skills to apply to new concepts. Teachers are providing Alex with math manipulatives to help make abstract concepts more concrete. They are also giving him opportunities to practice learned concepts on a daily basis with warm-up activity pages. During instruction and on standardized tests, Alex is allowed to use supplemental aids to support addition and subtraction concepts, including grid graphic organizers, mnemonic tools, graph paper, and place value supports.

Complete C8 Spinal Cord Injury

Jeff is a college-bound, ninth grade student who was in a severe automobile accident during his seventh-grade year. He suffered a Complete C8 Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) and has permanent loss of motor abilities in his legs and severe fine motor limitations in his hands. Due to his motor limitations, Jeff is classified as a student with quadriplegia. He has normal arm function and is able to maneuver a manual wheelchair. He will be learning to drive an adapted automobile during his Sophomore year. Jeff is on track to graduate with his grade-level peers and is taking advanced courses in History and English. He performs well in all of his classes, but his fine motor limitations prohibit him from completing written work without technology supports. Jeff is a proficient user of an assistive technology application called Dragon Naturally Speaking. Dragon is a voice recognition application that is loaded onto a laptop computer. It allows Jeff to control his computer, using only voice commands and dictate his written work directly into standard applications such as Microsoft Office, Excel, and Outlook. Current testing policies allow speech-to-text (STT) / voice recognition technologies to be used by qualifying students during high stakes assessments. Jeff is able to perform independently on computer-based tests, as long the test is compatible with Dragon Naturally Speaking and his voice files can be transferred to the computer he will use for testing.