

Adapting Grade-Appropriate Materials

**Georgia Alternate Assessment
Fall 2011-2012**



Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent
"Making Education Work for All Georgians"
www.gadoe.org

Why must *grade-appropriate* materials be used?

- Instruction and assessment for students taking the GAA must incorporate grade-appropriate activities and materials which represent the same grade-level content as their peers without disabilities.
- However, the activities and materials may be adapted to meet the individual needs of the student (e.g., reduce the language requirements or difficulty of the task) as long as the context of the materials used by same-age peers remains intact.



What does “grade appropriate” mean?

- appropriate for the student’s enrolled grade
- activities of same age peers (e.g., read and analyze a novel)
- specific activities for instruction and assessment
- participation in grade appropriate lessons with instruction & support
- whenever possible, same activities, materials, settings as same age peers
- respect the dignity of the student and energize learning



Why should adapted materials be grade appropriate?

- Curriculum needs to be adapted because a child who can't access materials in the same way other children can, can't learn the materials.
- Adapting grade-level materials allows students access to academic content while ensuring that instruction and assessment are meaningful and purposeful for the individual student.
- Teachers must consider what adaptations are appropriate for students on a case-by-case basis.



Adapting *grade-appropriate* materials

In order to be effective in adapting materials and methods, the characteristics of the material or instructional technique and the characteristics of the learner must be compared.*

- modify the instructional level of the material,
- address the learning characteristics of the student,
- address the communication level and mode of the student, and
- match the motivational characteristics of the student with the demands of the material.

*Cheney, C. (1989, September). The systematic adaptation of instructional materials and techniques for problem learners. *Academic Therapy*, 25(1), 25-30



Adapting *grade-appropriate* materials

- Determine the aligned skill.
 - What do we want the student to learn, practice, or master?
- How can the student best demonstrate the skill?
 - What is the student's most reliable means of differentiated response?
 - Think about what the student enjoys, can do well, or is motivated to attempt on her own.



Adapting *grade-appropriate* materials

- What parts of the activity will be difficult or impossible for the student to access independently?
 - Total independence should remain the goal of adaptations at all times, even though it might sometimes be impossible.
- Adapt materials to enable the student to learn, participate, and demonstrate knowledge and skills in a meaningful way.



Adapting *grade-appropriate* text

- Simplify language of text
- Highlight key words and phrases (e.g., color coding) and concepts (e.g., outlines, study guides)
- Define key words in context
- Use graphic, iconic, or pictorial forms
 - easily recognized or understood but relate back to the grade-level content (not too generic)
- Utilize visual aids (e.g., charts, graphs)
- Develop materials that appeal to various sensory modalities
 - tactile symbols/props
 - relate concepts to smell, taste, movement



Possible ways to adapt a text

- 1) Distill the grade-level text down to its parts
 - Characters Beginning
 - Setting Middle
 - Plot End
- 2) Break the grade-level text down by chapter or event—line by line
 - Each line of text supported by a picture, highlighting, color coding, icon, tactile object, etc.
- 3) Focus can be on
 - Theme
 - Predicted text
 - Repeated text



Example for adaptation exercise:

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn By Mark Twain



Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent
"Making Education Work for All Georgians"
www.gadoe.org

**Simplify the
language**

Jim and Huck are on the raft.

**Support with
graphics**



**Enlarge Print
Color Code
Highlight**

**Jim and Huck
are on the raft.**



Choose the appropriate graphic

Characters:



Huckleberry Finn, or...



Huckleberry Finn



Bring it to life with tactiles/objects

Huck's raft



Mississippi River



Main Characters

- Huckleberry Finn and Jim



- Tom Sawyer



- The Duke and the Dauphin



- Widow Douglas

and Miss Watson



- Pap

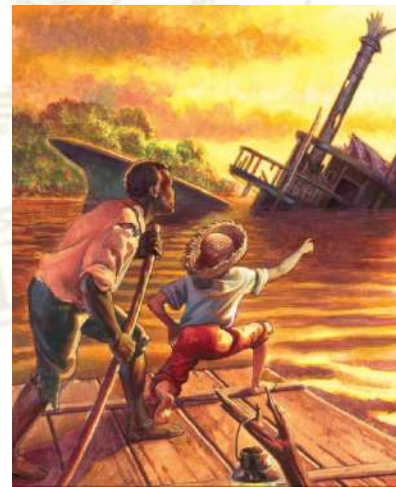


Setting

- St. Petersburg, Missouri



- On the Mississippi River



Plot

Beginning

- Picks up where *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* leaves off
- Huck is “adopted by” the Widow Douglas
- Huck escapes after being kidnapped by Pap
- Huck meets Jim, an escaped slave, while hiding out on Jackson Island

Middle

- Jim and Huck escape down the Mississippi river on a raft
- Jim and Huck are forced to work with con men
- Jim is sold back into slavery

End

- Huck and Tom help Jim escape
- Jim is shot during the escape
- Jim is freed from slavery by Miss Watson in her will
- Tom and Huck plot their next adventure



Themes

Themes are the fundamental ideas explored in a literary work.

- Themes in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

- Slavery and Racism
- Friendship
- Childhood
- Hypocrisy
- Lies and Cons



Making predictions from text and graphics



LEARNING ABOUT MOSES AND THE "BULBUSHERS."

- How does Huck feel as he sits through his lessons with the Widow Douglas?

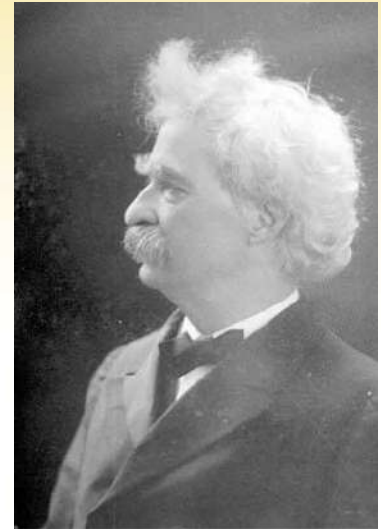


JIM AND 'THE GHOST.'

- What do you think Huck will do when he finds Jim hiding on the island?

About the Author

- Written by Mark Twain
 - Samuel Clemens was his real name
 - Born in 1835
 - Grew up in Hannibal, Missouri
 - St. Petersburg was modeled after Hannibal
 - Wrote well over 60 books
 - First book was *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*
 - Known as the father of American literature



Adapting text through symbols

- Symbols can be used to translate text into a “language” that is more easily understood
 - used to replace text or to aid in understanding text
 - Boardmaker symbols
 - Writing with Symbols
- <http://www.adaptedlearning.com/about.aspx>



Adapting Worksheets

- Assessment tasks documented through worksheets must be clearly aligned to grade-level standards although the content may be decreased in depth, breadth, and/or complexity.
- The worksheet itself must still be respectful of the student's age/grade-level
 - No childish graphics
 - pictures, symbols, language could be found in same grade classroom
 - Boardmaker, PCS, Writing with Symbols, etc. universally accepted across grade levels

