Example Curriculum Adaptations for Students with Down Syndrome

All Subject Areas:

•Identify the goal for the student.
•Utilize visual cues: pictures, objects, overhead projector, pocket charts, etc. , objects, etc.
•Break down directions into small steps.
•Only present a few problems or sentences at a time, enlarge font if needed.
•Allow extra time to response (written and verbal).
•Shorten length of assignment and/or number of problems required.
•Give options on how to complete task (i.e. handwrite or type, counting bears or blocks, etc.)
•Utilize hand-on tangible materials.
•Minimize distractions.
•Review concepts and build on prior knowledge.
•Use simple and familiar language.
•Use peer supports.
•Change content to reflect student's ability and interests.
•Tie into real life experiences.

Mathematics:

•Sketch out problems, and then write out the arithmetic for the solution afterwards.
•Act the problem out.
•Make it relevant and concrete: use manipulatives.
•Identify the goal for the student; focus on the main ideas, i.e. shapes vs. types of triangles.
•Incorporate the student's interests and experiences.
•Make sure there is enough visual and writing space.
•Use large grid paper to keep columns aligned.
•Provide an example to keep alongside student's work - generalizing takes time.
•Write out/discuss the steps involved in a problem and repeat the same problem many times so that students learn the steps not just the answers.
•Provide a number line for counting.
•Provide and teach about a 100's chart.
•Provide a calculator.
•Color code and/or highlight key phrases or concepts.
•Use consistent cues/visuals for computation process until skill is generalized (e.g. put large number in your head and count up).
•Tweak the general curriculum to build on student's goal (e.g. a double digit addition worksheet can become counting how many "6's" there are or building those numbers from manipulatives)
•Embed math concepts into other areas of the day (passing out materials, telling time, etc.)
•Sometimes a parallel curriculum (i.e. Numicon or Making Math Real) is necessary.
•Practice skills in real and meaningful situations.

Language Arts:

•Program book and/or portions into a speech generating device.
•Use adapted texts with visuals.
•Pre-read text with student.
•Locate book on tape.
•Have peers read with student.
•Incorporate drama, song and visuals into the story.
•Provide a story map or other graphic organizer.
•Have student sequence a series of events from the story.
•Ask factual rather than interpretive questions.
•Use Spark or Cliff Notes if available.
•Write a brief summary of larger, more complex texts for the student's use.
•Focus on core vocabulary.
•Provide photographs or pictures for writing inspiration.
•Allow access to word bank and/or stickers with scribed words to allow student to build sentences.
•Provide a starter sentence or stimulus question for writing assignments.
•Have a student or aide scribe for the student.
•Have the student trace over highlighter.
•Use cloze notes and/or just fill in periodic blanks/words.
•Limit the number of spelling words the student is to learn.
•Allow the student to type if handwriting presents a greater challenge.
•Vary writing implements and surfaces.
•Give multiple choice spelling tests (minimum 3 choices).
•Focus on core vocabulary.
•Have student draw picture, make collage, write poem as alternatives to longer writing assignments.