

## Disability-Related Need Affecting Reading

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The term “disability-related need affecting reading” refers to the manner in which a child’s disability(ies) adversely affects the child’s ability to read in relationship to grade level expectations. This may include effects on phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency (including oral reading skills), vocabulary development, and reading comprehension. The IEP team is responsible for identifying the disability-related needs of the child.

The statement of present levels of academic achievement and functional performance in the IEP must contain information identifying and describing the student’s disability-related needs and how these needs affect involvement and progress in the general education curriculum (for preschoolers age appropriate activities). The statement should establish a baseline of information to be used as the starting point from which to determine progress towards annual goals. The IEP team must develop measurable annual goal(s) designed to meet the student’s disability-related need(s). A goal may address more than one need. Each goal should be specific enough to allow the district to determine whether the student made progress and also make clear which specific skills may be required to achieve the goal. The IEP must include services designed to address the student’s needs and assist the student in meeting the goals.

### Example:

As a result of his disability, John demonstrates language difficulties in complex syntax which affect his ability to comprehend and use complex sentence forms in conversation with his peers and in academic activities. As a result, he is often confused and left out of both peer conversations and classroom discussions. In speech and language therapy, John is working on understanding and using independent clauses to form a complex sentence.

John’s difficulties in acquiring complex syntax forms have also significantly affected his reading comprehension. John’s syntactic impairment interferes with his understanding and use of longer complex verbal as well as written sequences. This impacts his reading comprehension as evidenced through his difficulty comprehending longer, complex text sequences versus shorter, simple text sequences. Classroom observation and work samples show John comprehends short written sequences, for example, “The boy is still waiting.” However, John exhibits significant difficulty in using and comprehending longer and more complex text sequences, for example, “The boy at the train station is still waiting at track even though the train left.”

The disability-related need affecting reading is John’s language deficit in complex syntax. It would be appropriate for the IEP team to include a goal to increase reading comprehension. A service might include, for example, speech and language therapy and/or specially designed instruction in reading.