



This guide offers suggestions for presenting **Curriculum Modifications: Putting It Into Action**. 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 (19 slides)
- Projector and audio equipment
- Learning Activities:
 - » *I Spy* (with slides)
 - » *Child Participation Evaluation Form*
 - » *Teacher's Modification Worksheet*
- Tips for Teachers
- Tools for Teachers
 - » *Child Participation Evaluation Form*
 - » *Teacher's Modification Worksheet*
 - » *Activity Matrix For Modifications*
- Flip chart or similar large paper, and markers for writing participant ideas

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- The purpose of this presentation is to teach participants how to use the different types of curriculum modifications to support individual children who struggle to fully participate.
- This is one in a series of in-service suites on curriculum modifications. If participants need a basic introduction, please reference the in-service suite, *Curriculum Modifications: An Introduction*. For a deeper look, an in-service suite is available for each of the eight general types of curriculum modifications.
- Slides 1 through 7 review the NCQTL House Framework and definition of curriculum modification. If participants are already familiar with this material, you can move quickly through these slides.
- Learning activities offer participants the opportunity to develop a plan to modify the environment, materials, or activities to promote the participation of specific children in their classrooms.

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 *Curriculum Modifications: An Introduction*.



SLIDE 1: CURRICULUM MODIFICATIONS: PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

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 planning for curriculum modifications.

Example: Ask participants to think of a time when they needed to modify their environment, or change an activity or pattern of interacting to improve their lives in some way. Ask them to share what they changed, and the plan they used to make it happen.

Possible answers:

- Plan to get healthier—exercise with a good friend two days a week, and modify meals to include more protein.
- Plan to leave the house more efficiently—install a key hook by the door; lay out items in advance (purse, clothes, snack).
- Plan to have more positive interactions—place reminder note on the refrigerator to share three things you appreciate about your partner/child/colleague each day; get counsel from a trusted friend; simplify expectations.



SLIDE 2: NCQTL'S FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE EVERYDAY PRACTICE

Introduce NCQTL.

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

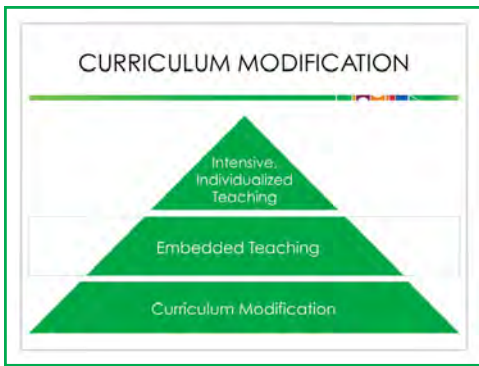
After the foundation of the house is secure and all the indicators of a high-quality early childhood program are in place, there may still be children who are struggling to participate or to maximize their potential.

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 practices 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 to plan for implementing different types of curriculum modifications to support individual children who struggle to fully participate.



SLIDE 4: OBJECTIVES

Objectives for the presentation:

- Review the different types of curriculum modifications.
- Discuss a plan for action.
- Organize a plan based on an individual child's needs.

NOTE

The last objective refers to the learning activities. Participants move through the steps from **initial identification** of a child who needs a bit more support to the **implementation and evaluation** of a modification strategy.

Participants will:

- Identify a child who needs additional support or challenge, and the specific concern.
- Determine a modification strategy.
- Organize an action plan.





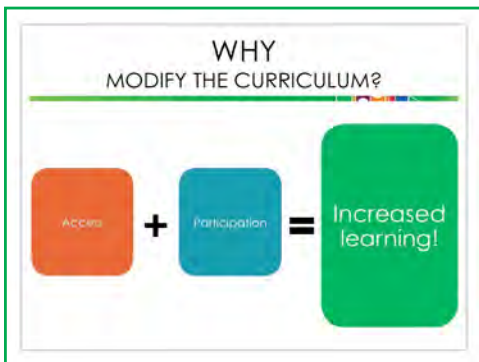
SLIDE 5: WHAT IS CURRICULUM MODIFICATION?

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 a 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.



SLIDE 6: WHY MODIFY THE CURRICULUM?

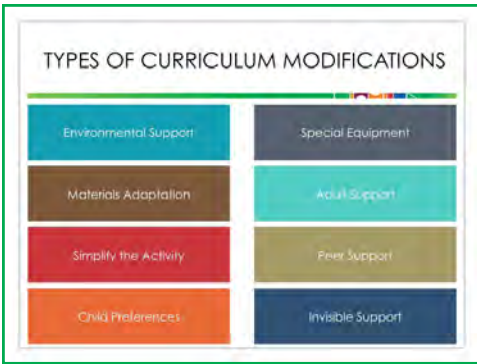
Teachers work hard to develop lessons that get each *individual* child *actively involved* in learning. Even with the most thoughtful lesson plans and well-structured classrooms, some children still struggle to participate or to maximize their potential. Simple modifications to the curriculum can help 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 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 7: 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
- Materials adaptation
- Simplify the activity
- Child preferences
- Special equipment
- Adult support
- Peer support
- Invisible support

The eight modification types are a framework to work from. Some modifications and adaptations fit into more than one category. The key is to find the most appropriate way to address each child's individual needs.

EMPHASIZE *

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



LEARNING ACTIVITY:

I SPY (WITH SLIDES)

In this activity, participants find as many modifications as they can in each of five photos. The photos are found on the supplemental slides included with this in-service suite:
Mod-IntoAction_LA-ISpy-Slides.pptx

HANDOUT

Distribute the *I Spy* learning activity and review the directions.

SLIDES

NOTE

To make this activity more interactive, participants can call out their answers instead of writing them down.



PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

- Observe and clarify the concern.
- Choose a modification strategy.
- Make a plan.
- Give it a try.
- Determine if it's working.

SLIDE 8: PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

As a teacher, you hope to see all children engaged and excited about learning. But what if a child doesn't seem to be participating fully? These steps can help the classroom team develop and implement a plan for that child.

Observe and clarify the concern: Carefully observe the child's level of participation. Figure out what the specific issue is.

Choose a modification strategy: Generate ideas. Choose the best way(s) to address the child's issue.

Make a plan: Decide what materials are needed and who will do what; use an activity matrix.

Give it a try: What changes do you see?

Determine if it's working: Continue observing to see what is working, and make necessary adjustments.

OBSERVE AND CLARIFY

When do you see confidence?



When do you see withdrawal?



SLIDE 9: OBSERVE AND CLARIFY

The first step to ensure children's success in the classroom is to understand their specific needs. When you carefully observe, you can recognize when a child becomes disengaged. That will help you clarify and understand the specific issue. Then it's possible to find the best ways to provide more individual support or more challenge.

These questions can help you see how and when a specific child needs more support:

- What are the expectations during daily activities or routines for all children?
- Which activities does the child seem to participate in only partially?
- During these activities, what is the specific concern you have for this child, compared to what you expect from all of the children?

In other words, when does the child show confidence and when does confidence lag? Notice when the child is frustrated, unusually quiet, distracted, discouraged, apathetic, or bored. Then, find ways to build on the child's strengths, and offer more support or challenge when needed.





LEARNING ACTIVITY:

CHILD PARTICIPATION EVALUATION FORM

In this activity, participants increase their awareness of a child's need for additional support or enrichment throughout the day. This may be a child who is struggling to learn, a child who is a dual language learner (DLL), or a child who is an advanced learner.

Participants can work individually or with their teams.

HANDOUT

Distribute the learning activity and the *Tools for Teachers* handouts for the *Child Participation Evaluation Form*, and review the directions. Go over the *Example: Child Participation Evaluation Form* on the *Tools for Teachers* handout before asking participants to complete the learning activity. A blank form for classroom use is included.

DISCUSSION

If time allows, ask volunteers to share examples, thoughts, and questions from this activity.

NOTE

Participants may use the information from their completed *Child Participation Evaluation Form* when they work on subsequent learning activities.



CHOOSE A MODIFICATION STRATEGY

- Match supports with the child's needs.
- Keep it simple.
- You can try more than one.
- Don't be afraid to experiment.



SLIDE 10: CHOOSE A MODIFICATION STRATEGY

Curriculum modifications are especially useful when a child seems to need a small amount of added challenge or support. If the child is interested or attempting to participate with peers, but isn't fully engaged, simple changes to classroom activities or routines are likely to increase the child's involvement. Curriculum modifications are a great place to start before moving into more intensive teaching practices.

When deciding how to best support the child, consider the following tips.

Match supports with the child's needs.

What is the specific concern for this child? What support is most likely to address that need? Think also about what you know about this particular child, including strengths and preferences.

For example: If you know that a little boy *loves* horses and he usually plays alone, you can give toy horses to some of his peers and see if he is more willing to join in their play.

Quick Quiz:

How would you modify for a child who is squirmy at circle? When she can focus, she engages in the discussion topics and songs.

- a) Seat her next to her favorite peer.
- b) Give her a bumpy cushion filled with a little air (so that she can have some movement but stay in one spot).
- c) Give her a rainbow sticker for her hand if she sits still the whole circle time.

Answer: B

Keep it simple.

The simpler a modification is, the easier it is to implement. Try a simple approach first. Make adjustments and add more support as needed.

Remember that curriculum modifications are *small* changes to instruction. If a simple solution isn't helping, the child may need more intensive teaching practices.

You can try more than one.

Sometimes a combination of modifications can work best. For example, a child isn't going to the book area. She may respond when you add books about her favorite characters to the library (child preferences). In addition, a preferred adult can sit with her and read the first book (adult support) to get her settled.

SLIDE 10 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Don't be afraid to experiment.

The first ideas aren't always successful. Teachers spend much of their time observing, making their best guesses about strategies to support learning, trying out ideas, and evaluating how well they work. Don't be afraid to try a new idea to help a child who needs more support or challenge.

If at first you don't succeed...

Give yourself about a week to decide if an approach is working or not. If it isn't working, try other ways of modifying the activity, routine, or materials before moving to a more intensive level of instruction.

HANDOUT 

Distribute the *Tips for Teachers* handout which includes an overview of the eight types of modifications.

**SLIDE 11:**
MAKE A PLAN

Sometimes a teacher can make modifications in the moment, especially when adjustments are minimal and the right materials are available. Other times, some planning is necessary to ensure that supports are ready for a child when needed. The following questions can help in the planning process.

What needs to be done?

Determine what materials need to be gathered, made, and/or adapted.

Who will do it?

Decide who will be responsible for gathering, making, and/or adapting materials, and who will put the modification into action.

When will it be ready?

Decide when the modification should be ready to use.

How will everyone stay informed?

Everyone on the team needs to know when, where, and how to use the modifications. An activity matrix is a useful way to keep all team members informed and prepared.





LEARNING ACTIVITY:

TEACHER'S MODIFICATION WORKSHEET

In this activity, participants use a worksheet to practice selecting modification strategies to meet the specific needs of a child in their classroom. The worksheet also asks them to think about who will gather any necessary materials and by what date. Encourage participants to complete this worksheet with all members of their classroom team who are present.

HANDOUT

- Distribute the learning activity and the *Tools for Teachers* handouts for the *Teacher's Modification Worksheet*, and review the directions.
- Ideally, participants can use their notes from the *Child Participation Evaluation Form* learning activity to complete this learning activity.
- Refer participants to the *Tools for Teachers* for a completed example of the *Teacher's Modification Worksheet*.
- A blank form for classroom use is included.

DISCUSSION

If time allows, ask participants to share a selected modification and their implementation plan.



USE A MATRIX

Teacher's name: Maria Date: 2/24/14

Communication modifications planned for:			
Daily schedule	Name	Difficulties	Name
Entrance			
Circle time		Plan personal April experience. Encourage to participate with and demonstrate the group.	
Small group		Provide support to be prepared. The girl has a consistent state of alertness indicated by showing awareness.	
Workstations			
Center time		Additional visual support will be added for the group. Encourage to participate with and demonstrate the group.	
Learning center meeting			
Dismissal time			

SLIDE 12: USE A MATRIX

This activity matrix is a communication tool that can help all members of the teaching team know when and where modifications are planned for each child.

The daily class routines and transitions are listed down the left column. The names of children who need additional support or challenge are written across the top rows. Then modifications are added for each child.

In addition to the child who needs more support or challenge, there may be modifications that all children in the classroom can benefit from. If the teacher decides to provide everyone with the same support, there's no need to put that information on the matrix (carpet squares, individual work trays for art projects, large group visuals, a class-wide buddy system, etc.).

Using an activity matrix for planning curriculum modifications:

- Makes it easy to see important times to provide additional support or challenge for specific children.
- Ensures that all staff are aware of individual children's needs and how to support or challenge them.
- Increases the likelihood that all children will be supported and given access to important learning opportunities.

A tool for review and reflection

The matrix can also be used for review and reflection. Before the children arrive, team members can review the modifications they have planned for individual children throughout the day. At the end of the day, they can use the matrix to share information about how well the modifications worked.

HANDOUT

- Distribute the *Tools for Teachers* handout for the *Example: Activity Matrix For Modifications*.
- A blank matrix for classroom use is included.

NOTE

Refer to the *Embedded Teaching and Learning* in-service suite, *Activity Matrix: Organizing Learning Throughout the Day*, for more information on how to use an activity matrix to plan specific learning activities and make sure they occur.





Length of video: Approximately 2 minutes and 42 seconds

SLIDE 13: VIDEO: MODIFICATIONS IN ACTION

Introduce the video.

A plan is only as valuable as the outcome. This video shows teachers in Head Start classrooms across the nation implementing curriculum modifications to support the learning of children in their classrooms.

VIDEO

DISCUSSION

Ask participants to either share examples from the video that they found helpful, or examples of curriculum modifications they have successfully used to increase children’s participation.



SLIDE 14: DETERMINE IF IT'S WORKING

To know if the curriculum modifications are working, it’s important to assess the child’s progress. (Remind participants that in the last column of the *Teacher’s Modification Worksheet* there’s a place to take notes.)

The following decision tree can help guide your assessment process:

Is the child participating more fully?

Yes

- **The child’s level of participation is improving:** The child is increasingly engaged and becoming more independent within the activity or routine.
Keep it up: Continue to monitor; does the support continue to increase the child’s participation, or is another modification worth trying?
- **The child is fully participating and engaged.**
Phase out support: As the child participates with more independence and confidence, decrease the level of support offered. This empowers the child, prevents dependency, and allows teachers and other adults to focus their attention where it’s most needed.

SLIDE 14 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



No

- **The child is showing no signs of improvement:** The child is not more engaged or more independent.
Be creative, try something else: Curriculum modifications usually work pretty quickly if they're going to work, so if the child's level of participation doesn't increase after 3 to 5 days, try something else. It may take a bit of trial and error before you find the modification that is the right fit for the child.
- **The child is *still* showing no signs of improvement:** Sometimes a child still isn't making progress after several modifications have been attempted. In this case, you may need to provide a higher level of support and increased learning opportunities to *teach* a specific learning objective.

Just the right amount of support

Teaching is a dynamic process. Shifts in a child's life (vacation, illness, decrease in motivation) may result in varying levels of independence. Be prepared to increase and decrease levels of support *in the moment* to respond to the child's needs.

NOTE

When it's clear that curriculum modifications won't be enough, you may need to use more focused or intensive teaching practices. For more information on the topics below, see these in-service suites:

- Adjusting the level of support—see *Highly Individualized Teaching and Learning: An Overview*.
- Breaking down goals into smaller learning steps—see *Embedded Teaching and Learning: Breaking Down Goals*.
- Increasing learning opportunities—see *Embedded Teaching and Learning: The Teaching Loop*.
- Providing more structured teaching interactions—see *Embedded Teaching and Learning: The Teaching Loop*.





SLIDE 15: ANY CONCERNS?

Ask participants if there are any barriers or concerns holding them back from using curriculum modifications in their classrooms. Be sure to address the following questions at some point during the discussion:

What if everyone wants it?

Can you find another activity or time of day where you could let the other children explore the modification or adaptive materials?

Is it fair?

Yes. It is fair to give all children the opportunity to have access and participate. You can discuss with the children the fact they all have skills that they are good at, and skills that they're working on. So, although one child may need more support in one way, another needs more support in *another* way. This kind of dialogue can help establish a sense of community where everyone works together to make sure *everyone's* needs are going to be met.

Will it distract the other children?

Typically the non-participation of children is itself distracting, especially when the teacher's attention is drawn away from the focus of the activity or routine. The goal of modifications and adaptations is to promote engagement and independence while gradually reducing adult support. This allows all children the opportunity to participate fully without distraction to others. In the rare occasion that it does distract children, the novelty that creates distraction generally fades quickly.

What if the child becomes dependent on the support?

Once a support is in place, and is working, the last, critical step is to lessen the support as much as possible to promote independence. If the child needs the modification for an indefinite period of time and can easily manage it, there's no harm. As adults, we rely on many supports (hand-held devices for appointments, large-print books to avoid eye-strain, visuals to inspire goal achievement, calming music to focus on a task).

What if it doesn't work?

If it doesn't work, try something else! Sometimes it takes a bit of trial and error before you can find the modification that is the right fit for a child.





Length of video: Approximately 1 minutes and 29 seconds

SLIDE 16: VIDEO: MAKING AN IMPACT

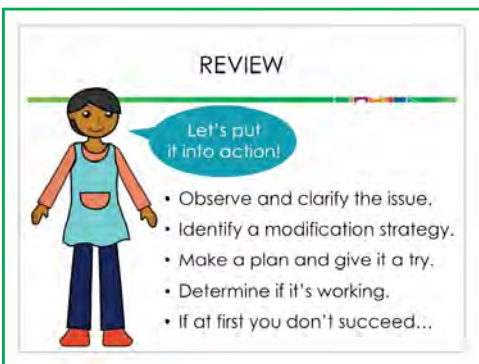
Introduce the video.

This video focuses on the benefits of using curriculum modifications to support individual children.

VIDEO 

DISCUSSION 

Ask participants to share comments and questions.



SLIDE 17: REVIEW

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

Putting it into action:

- Observe the child and clarify the issue.
- Identify a modification strategy.
- Make a plan and give it a try.
- Determine if it's working.
- If at first you don't succeed...

HANDOUT 

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

- Distribute and review *Tips for Teachers*.
- Distribute and review *Tools for Supervisors*.
- Distribute and review *Tools for Teachers*.
- Distribute and review 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' level of understanding of curriculum modifications.

EMPHASIZE

Create a community where everyone can be successful.



FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY:

SHARE THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS WITH PARTICIPANTS:

- Work with a team member from your classroom to determine one or two children who are not fully participating because they need more support or challenge.
- Brainstorm and choose a modification strategy.
- Make a plan to determine what needs to be prepared, by whom, and by what date.
- Give it a try!
- Remember to continue observing to see if the plan is working.
- Make adjustments as needed.

NOTE

All forms needed for the suggestions above can be found in the *Tools for Teachers* handouts.



SLIDE 18 EVERY CHILD IS WORTH IT!



SLIDE 19 CLOSING

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