

ASSISTIVE/ AUGMENTATIVE TECHNOLOGY:

Assisting Students with Visual Impairment and Blindness

What is Assistive/ Augmentative Technology?

Assistive Technology is “any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability” (IDEA, 2017).

- **Braille Flash Cards**

- **Low Tech**

- This level refers to assistive tools that are low cost, easy to procure, and do not involve complex training to administer.

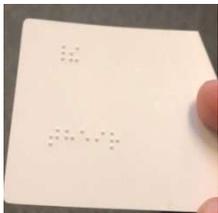


Image Courtesy of Paths to Literacy.org

An example of low-tech assistive technology for students with visual impairment and blindness are Braille flash cards. These cards help students study and read text by touch, using the Braille system.

2. Battery-Powered Magnifiers

- **Mid-Tech**

- This level of assistance refers to assistive tools that are moderate in cost, usually battery-powered, and require some training to use.



Image courtesy of The Carrol Center.com

An example of mid-tech assistive technology for students with visual impairment are battery-powered magnifiers. These technologies are small, battery-powered magnifying glasses, usually with an LED light included, that help visually impaired students see text more clearly. The magnifiers are a moderately-priced support that is portable and effective.

3. Text-to-Braille and Speech Software

- a. **High-Tech**

- i. This level of assistance refers to assistive tools that are higher in cost, usually involve computers or are electrically or structurally complex, and require significant training to utilize.



Image courtesy of Freedom Science.com

An example of high-tech assistive technology for students with visual impairment and blindness is software that converts text to Braille and speech. Students with visual impairment and blindness can have access to text through both tactile and auditory methods with text to Braille and speech software.

References

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