Teaching Assistant
Support Learning Activities
Develop and adapt resources to meet the needs of learners

Some children have additional needs that may require the adaptation of resources to enable their learning. One example is that used in AC2.1, where a sight-impaired child might need textbook information to be blown up on the photocopier.

What other types of adaptation do you think might be useful for a sight-impaired child?

Specialist resources

Most schools lean quite heavily on their SENCO for initial ideas, but once you get the picture of the sorts of things individual children may need in order to be better able to access resources, you should be able to run with your own ideas around this, and seek advice if you get stuck.

Some companies specialise in equipment that can support children with specific learning difficulties, or other additional needs, and your school should be able to signpost you to a website or catalogue that supplies these items if they are needed.

Specialist items for helping children with specific disabilities might include things like magnifying glasses, hearing loops, audiobooks, special software, ergonomic-designed pens, computer mice, and rulers with handles, and so on.
Ensure learning resources meet pupils' needs.

**Adapting resources**

Some additional needs may provide greater challenges than others when it comes to adapting the resources your class uses. You may also find that some individual children have quite unusual difficulties, while in other cases there may be several pupils who have a similar or related disability or difficulty.

Communication disorders can provide interesting challenges for pupils and for those supporting their learning, and each solution won't necessarily work for every child with a communication disorder. Examples of communication disorders might be some form of autism, or a difficulty in processing information.
Some ways in which learning materials and resources could be adapted for children with communication disorders might be to create flashcards or labels for equipment to make it easier for them to understand what they should use for what lesson.

For example, they may be unclear that pencils write on some surfaces but not on others. Creating a visual label on the boxes of pens, pencils and crayons may be one way in which they can figure it out better. Good learning is often achieved in an exploratory way, so rather than always spelling things out to children who struggle, it can be beneficial to engage them by guiding them in the right direction, and to attempt to draw their own conclusions based on the information available.

**Developing resource adaptations**

Where you find that your adaptation of a particular resource or material helped a child who had some kind of additional need, you may find it is beneficial to record this somewhere, even if it is just in your own reflective journal. If something didn't work so well, you should also record this and think about how you might further adapt the item next time.

The reason for this is that as you develop resources and observe how useful they were to the learner, you can use your knowledge again in the future. This means that you don't have to 'reinvent the wheel' every time, and means that you are extra prepared going forward with different classes.