Web Resources for Teachers
for Differentiating Instruction
for Students with Disabilities
Differentiation Focus: Middle & High School English programs

<u>Bookshare</u>
http://www.bookshare.org

Bookshare is a free online reading resource to U.S. students that have a Proof of Disability. This reading resource allows students with disabilities that affect their reading to have access to a variety of print materials through a multitude of individualized adapted formats. Print materials in the database include textbooks, educational resource texts, tradebooks, and a variety of fiction and nonfiction novels, short stories, articles, and essays. While Bookshare is most useful to students with visual impairments or physical disabilities that have difficulty viewing print material, the database and its adapted materials can serve a variety of disability types. Formats of text include synthesized speech, enlarged print, braille, and simultaneous sight & sound programs. Bookshare is funded from the US Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs and can be used by teachers to differentiate instruction by providing alternative text formats. The online resource contains digital, modified, and adapted texts from the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Center for students to access both in school and at home. While students with an identified disability can subscribe to Bookshare for free, educational organizations such as school districts can also obtain Bookshare access.

<u>Symbol World</u>
http://www.symbolworld.org

Symbol World is a user friendly, easy to navigate, symbols-based online resource created by Widgit Symbol Software. Symbol World contains a diverse range of educational folders such as reading materials, recipes, games, news, and content articles. The website is set up to mirror popular augmentative and alternative communication systems, so that the transition from an AAC system to a computer is seamless. Symbol world can be used for any students with disabilities who communicate using a symbol system. For these reasons, symbol world can be best utilized for students with autism who have severe communication limitations. In addition to working on a symbol format, the website can also be individualized by the user depending on personal viewing needs. For example, there is a website setting called "dyslexia" which adapts the presentation of the website to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities. Symbol World is a free online resource that can be utilized by the teacher as a supplemental resource for interactive reading experiences.

Universal Design for Learning Editions by Cast
http://udleditions.cast.org/

Universal Design for Learning Editions is an online reading web resource sponsored by the non-profit research and development organization, CAST-Center for Applied Special Technology. UDL Editions provides interactive, scaffolded online texts for teachers to differentiate instruction. UDL editions provides texts through multiple formats and media, provides multiple pathways for student strategy within a text, and provides multiple ways for student engagement and motivation. When interacting with a text, the teacher may choose an animated coach to accompany the student's reading experience, with choices including maximum, moderate, or minimal support. While reading the text, the automated coach will provide students with reading scaffolding and will promote students to activities, additional resources, and reading strategies. Because of the different tiers of reader support, UDL editions can be helpful for a variety of students with disabilities. The prompting of applying reading strategies can best benefit students with learning disabilities who specifically struggle with reading or memory problems. For example, the moderate support tiered reading provides highlighting of important concepts and critical features as well as immediate feedback for responses.

Universal Design for Learning Book Builder
http://bookbuilder.cast.org

The Cast UDL Book Builder allows teachers and students to create their own digital interactive books through an all inclusive, free, online format. The CAST UDL Book Builder not only allows its user to create books, but to also share and collaborate on engaging texts. This online resource can be used as a creative way for alternative student project assessment, or can be used by teachers to better personalize and individualize instruction by modifying and adapting their own texts for their inclusive classroom. The most notable feature of the Book Builder is the ability to add images to previously written literature and texts. The addition of visuals can help students with learning disabilities who have difficulty comprehending large chunks of text and can help increase student interest and motivation. In addition, the amount of text on a page, and font size and color are entirely customizable so texts can be made with color filters to remedy effects of dyslexia, or can be enlarged in order to accommodate students with vision loss. This online resource is free to both students and teachers.

Differentiation Central
http://www.differentiationcentral.com

Differentiation Central is an online resource and information center run by Carol Tomlinson, the lead authority on differentiated instruction. This online resource database functions as hub for information for teachers about curriculum differentiation and as an up to date library of current differentiation practices. The database includes lecture, videos, articles, and materials addressed to teachers who want to differentiate instruction. Differentiation Central also has a variety of resources for lesson planning, as well as model tiered lessons. Differentiation Central is geared more for individual teachers, school districts, and professional development seminars. This is a resource that can be used by all levels and content areas of teachers. The resources included allow for teacher to differentiate instruction for all types of learners, regardless of their disability type. This online resource contains lesson plan templates to make differentiating instruction an easy and personalized experience. Additionally, the website provides extensive activities for teachers to incorporate KUDs (Know, Understand, and be able to Do learning goals) so that teachers can frame their instruction with individualized and tiered student learning outcomes.

No Red Ink
https://www.noredink.com

No Red Ink is an online resource that focuses on teaching grammar, writing skills, and techniques of writing. The site is free for teachers and students. A teacher can create an account, and use the No Red Ink online teaching tools to create individualized lessons and activities for students. A teacher can give each student an access code so they can access personalized activities and lessons from home or school computers. Activities and lessons on No Red Ink allow students to engage in fun interactive grammar and writing practice through high interest modules that provide immediate and differentiated feedback. Each writing module contains high interest content, tailored by student interests, in order to teach or supplement writing lessons. This high interest, high motivation approach to writing can help teach students grammar and writing techniques while providing extensive personalized practice and feedback. For these reasons, No Red Ink can be highly beneficial to students with learning disabilities who suffer from dysgraphia, have memory problems, or need additional practice with writing in smaller chunks. No Red Ink can also be used to help students with intellectual disabilities who have difficulty generalizing learning strategies or concepts by allowing them to apply and practice skills in a variety of module environments.

UDL Toolkit
http://udltechtoolkit.wikispaces.com

The Universal Design for Learning toolkit is a must have digital resource for teachers who wish to differentiate instruction in their classroom using free online technology. The UDL toolkit, which won a "Best Educational Wiki Award," compiles a variety of high quality links and resources that provides teachers with educational, downloadable, and templated teaching resources. Areas served include literacy tools, writing tools, study skill tools, research tools, multimedia and digital storytelling tools, specific disability accommodation resources, and other collaborative tools. The UDL toolkit can provide teachers with online resources on how to differentiate instruction based on students individualized needs, as well as provide teacher will online tools to actually differentiate their instruction. Additionally, the UDL toolkit provides information about how to accommodate for students with disabilities using low-tech or offline strategies, such as how to create customized lined paper to help students with dysgraphia, or how to embed verbal prompts into computer document assignments for students with visual disabilities or students with ADHD who need highly organized step by step directions. Because the UDL toolkit lists only free links or resources with limited free access, the UDL toolkit can be a valuable fully inclusive wiki for teachers and districts to quickly and easily incorporate differentiated instruction into their classroom.

Voki
http://www.voki.com

Voki in an online interactive site where students can create their own avatars to express themselves in discussions, presentations, and online classroom environments. Voki is a free service that allows for students to create their own customized speaking character. The student's avatar can be used in a variety of digital environments, such as online classroom discussion, video construction, or in a presentation. The Voki avatar allows for students to create and engage in speaking experiences that they may not other wise be able to, either because they have a deaf or hard of hearing disability, a communication disorder, or are on the autism spectrum and are uncomfortable speaking publicly or in large groups. Through Voki, students can write dialogue for their character, listen to it, and modify it when needed. This provides students with extensive practice before presenting their work. This site comes equipped with lesson plans for teachers to individualize to meet their needs of their students, and can be used by teacher to create individualized video modules for students, such as individualized and engaging directions for students for an extended project. The fun and simple user face allows students to participate in meaningful social experiences digitally.

Voice Thread
https://voicethread.com

Voicethread is an online audio recording tool that also has a free app for apple users. In addition to online capabilities, Voicethread can be used on mobile devices, installed through a Google chrome app, and can track and monitor individual and organization use and progress through analytics. Voicethread allows students to upload, share, discuss, and present documents, images, audio files, and videos. Students can record their own voice and discussion while sharing items digitally. For students who have communication disabilities and trouble producing oral reports, visual impairments who can't fully interact with written text, or emotional disabilities with extreme anxiety in participating in class discussion, Voicethread can be used to interact socially with one another and the teacher in meaningful ways centered around digital activities both at home and in the classroom. Voicethread conversations are asynchronous so students can make contributions to ongoing conversations whenever they have a few spare minutes of class time. Voicethread can be used by teachers to engage all learners in meaningful classroom discussion and social experiences.

Class Dojo
http://www.classdojo.com

Class Dojo is an online, interactive, behavior management resource for all levels and types of learners. Although focused for elementary and middle school grades, Class Dojo could be used with individual students in high school grades or for whole classes effectively. Class Dojo allows teachers to give out points based on student behaviors. Teachers can customize the point system to mirror a token economy program. When awarded points, students each have their own "character" and are enabled to participate in more online games and activities depending on the amount of points they receive. Teachers can instantly reinforce positive behavior using a computer or mobile device; a teacher can also select to have the feedback be sent instantly to the student on a digital device. Because of the high interest and interactive online activities, Class Dojo can be a rewarding and simple way to reinforce positive behaviors. Class Dojo can be used to help monitor students with emotional behavioral disorders challenging negative behaviors such as opposition, can be used to reward a student with ADHD for staying on task for a certain amount of time, or could be used to reinforce a student with autism's task completion. Class Dojo can be used to personalize individual behavior plans or entire classroom management programs.