

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

IN (SPECIAL) EDUCATION

Some context...

In 2017, more than **13%** of Canadian students reported having one or more disabilities and **17%** of these are characterized as Learning Disabilities (LD). Others include mobility, hearing, seeing, memory, dexterity, mental health, and developmental disabilities. Half of these students require at least one aid, assistive device, or educational accommodation. **24%** require a computer, laptop and/or tablet with specialized software or adaptation.



What is Assistive Technology (AT)?

"any item, piece of equipment, software program, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities"

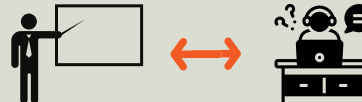
- Assistive Technology Industry Association (ATIA)



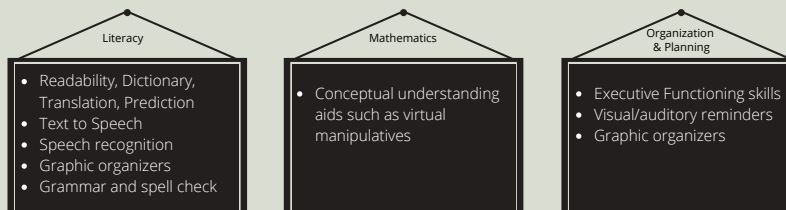
Visual + Aural + Tactile

Examples include, but are not limited to: adaptive keyboards, assistive writing programs and browsers, eye-gaze technology, interactive SMART Boards, screen readers, touch screens, voice recognition and voice production software, wireless headsets, amplifiers, switches, and table PCs.

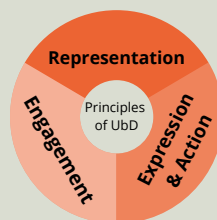
Instructional Technologies (IT) utilized by teachers can easily be adapted to function as AT for students



AT in the Classroom provides students with...



Understanding by Design (UbD)



How does AT fit into UbD?

- Multi-modal
- Flexible
- User choice
- Varied representation of information
- Appeals to various learning profiles

Legislation

Special Education Technology (SET-BC)

Provincial (BC) technology resource program assisting schools with technology utilization.

2015 Report: *Disability and Inclusion in Canadian Education – Policy, Procedure, and Practice*

Discusses special education policies in Canada. Mentions AT but is not central focus.

The opportunity to succeed: Achieving barrier-free education for students with disabilities

Report by Ontario Human Rights Commission discussing barrier-free education, and mentions AT.

Limitations

- Lack of common vision
- Limited staff training
- Access to support services
- Insufficient funding
- Lack of teacher time
- Reliance on power/charging