

---

# AP Research Academic Paper

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

### **Inside:**

#### **Sample I**

- Scoring Guideline**
- Student Samples**
- Scoring Commentary**

# 2018 AP Research Academic Paper Rubric v1.0

The response...

<p><b>Score of 1</b> Report on Existing Knowledge</p>	<p><b>Score of 2</b> Report on Existing Knowledge with Simplistic Use of a Research Method</p>	<p><b>Score of 3</b> Ineffectual Argument for a New Understanding</p>	<p><b>Score of 4</b> Well-Supported, Articulate Argument Conveying a New Understanding</p>	<p><b>Score of 5</b> Rich Analysis of a New Understanding Addressing a Gap in the Research Base</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents an overly broad topic of inquiry.</li> <li>• Situates a topic of inquiry within a single perspective derived from scholarly works <b>OR</b> through a variety of perspectives derived from mostly non-scholarly works.</li> <li>• Describes a search and report process.</li> <li>• Summarizes or reports existing knowledge in the field of understanding pertaining to the topic of inquiry.</li> <li>• Generally communicates the student’s ideas, although errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization distract or confuse the reader.</li> <li>• Cites <b>AND/OR</b> attributes sources (in bibliography/works cited and/or in-text), with multiple errors and/or an inconsistent use of a discipline-specific style.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents a topic of inquiry with narrowing scope or focus, that is NOT carried through either in the method or in the overall line of reasoning.</li> <li>• Situates a topic of inquiry within a single perspective derived from scholarly works <b>OR</b> through a variety of perspectives derived from mostly non-scholarly works.</li> <li>• Describes a nonreplicable research method <b>OR</b> provides an oversimplified description of a method, with questionable alignment to the purpose of the inquiry.</li> <li>• Summarizes or reports existing knowledge in the field of understanding pertaining to the topic of inquiry.</li> <li>• Generally communicates the student’s ideas, although errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization distract or confuse the reader.</li> <li>• Cites <b>AND/OR</b> attributes sources (in bibliography/works cited and/or in-text), with multiple errors and/or an inconsistent use of a discipline-specific style.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carries the focus or scope of a topic of inquiry through the method <b>AND</b> overall line of reasoning, even though the focus or scope might still be narrowing.</li> <li>• Situates a topic of inquiry within relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives, although connections to some works may be unclear.</li> <li>• Describes a reasonably replicable research method, with questionable alignment to the purpose of the inquiry.</li> <li>• Conveys a new understanding or conclusion, with an underdeveloped line of reasoning <b>OR</b> insufficient evidence.</li> <li>• Competently communicates the student’s ideas, although there may be some errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization.</li> <li>• Cites <b>AND</b> attributes sources, using a discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited <b>AND</b> in-text), with few errors or inconsistencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focuses a topic of inquiry with clear and narrow parameters, which are addressed through the method and the conclusion.</li> <li>• Explicitly connects a topic of inquiry to relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives <b>AND</b> logically explains how the topic of inquiry addresses a gap.</li> <li>• Logically defends the alignment of a detailed, replicable research method to the purpose of the inquiry.</li> <li>• Supports a new understanding or conclusion through a logically organized line of reasoning <b>AND</b> sufficient evidence. The limitations and/or implications, if present, of the new understanding or conclusion are oversimplified.</li> <li>• Competently communicates the student’s ideas, although there may be some errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization.</li> <li>• Cites <b>AND</b> attributes sources, with a consistent use of an appropriate discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited <b>AND</b> in-text), with few to no errors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focuses a topic of inquiry with clear and narrow parameters, which are addressed through the method and the conclusion.</li> <li>• Explicitly connects a topic of inquiry to relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives <b>AND</b> logically explains how the topic of inquiry addresses a gap.</li> <li>• Logically defends the alignment of a detailed, replicable research method to the purpose of the inquiry.</li> <li>• Justifies a new understanding or conclusion through a logical progression of inquiry choices, sufficient evidence, explanation of the limitations of the conclusion, and an explanation of the implications to the community of practice.</li> <li>• Enhances the communication of the student’s ideas through organization, use of design elements, conventions of grammar, style, mechanics, and word precision, with few to no errors.</li> <li>• Cites <b>AND</b> attributes sources, with a consistent use of an appropriate discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited <b>AND</b> in-text), with few to no errors.</li> </ul>

# AP<sup>®</sup> RESEARCH 2018 SCORING COMMENTARY

## Academic Paper

### Overview

This performance task was intended to assess students' ability to conduct scholarly and responsible research and articulate an evidence-based argument that clearly communicates the conclusion, solution, or answer to their stated research question. More specifically, this performance task was intended to assess students' ability to:

- Generate a focused research question that is situated within or connected to a larger scholarly context or community;
- Explore relationships between and among multiple works representing multiple perspectives within the scholarly literature related to the topic of inquiry;
- Articulate what approach, method, or process they have chosen to use to address their research question, why they have chosen that approach to answering their question, and how they employed it;
- Develop and present their own argument, conclusion, or new understanding while acknowledging its limitations and discussing implications;
- Support their conclusion through the compilation, use, and synthesis of relevant and significant evidence generated by their research;
- Use organizational and design elements to effectively convey the paper's message;
- Consistently and accurately cite, attribute, and integrate the knowledge and work of others, while distinguishing between the student's voice and that of others;
- Generate a paper in which word choice and syntax enhance communication by adhering to established conventions of grammar, usage, and mechanics.

AP Research

### Introduction

Students all around the world face difficulties in their learning daily. Some people have a hard time reading or writing while other students may have a hard time understanding what is being taught by their teachers. The classroom is supposed to be a space for students to feel comfortable in that environment. No matter what a child may be going through academically, each student should have a teachers and administartors that are willing to help them succeed. This concludes my topic on ways to help students with learning disabilities in the classroom. What are ways to help students with learning disabilities in the classroom? How can teachers provide the extra help needed for success? The goal for this research is to find alternative ways to that'll help students not only in the classroom but also outside of the classroom. Throughout the past few years, technology has gradually advanced and became a huge advantage for teachers as well as students all around the world. Technology has shaped the way that we learn. Which conludes my hypothesis; if teachers increase the amount of time they individually spend interacting with each student who suffers from learning disabilities, students will be more open to learn better content in classrooms. Teachers and guardians have to put in that extra step to make things as comfortable as possible for their students to help them succeed educationally

### Methodology & Gap

The method I found usefully for my research was the qualitative method. The qualitative method is the use of observations, gathering of information, and researching. Observating was

my key component for my research. The qualitative research method was the most helpful method to choose for my research. The qualitative method uses techniques such as interviews, gathering specific data, and observing. I went with the idea to interview teachers one-on-one by asking certain questions to get a better understanding on how teachers may deal with students who learn differently from others. I chose the qualitative method because I found this method the most useful to help gather the data I find. This method helped me capture what I wanted to find most by observing and most importantly asking questions to better understand. I found that speaking with some students and asking them things such as “what do you like most about learning in class?” and “what are some ways that you think you learn best?” Before the qualitative research method, I thought about using the Observation Study. I decided not to use that method because it would be primarily on just observing and I enjoy asking a lot of questions to understand things. This method helped me capture what I wanted to find most by observing and most importantly asking questions to better understand. I found that speaking with some students and asking them things such as “what do you like most about learning in class?” and “what are some ways that you think you learn best?” Before the qualitative research method, I thought about using the Observation Study. The gap is to prevent isolation between students. Students who suffer with learning disabilities can deal with the feeling of isolation, overwhelmed, and unconfident.

### Literature Review

A learning disability refers to underdeveloped skills in one or more areas, usually related to neurological disorders, and applies to students whose intelligence level is average or above. Learning disabilities can not be fixed so it is considered a life long challenge. However, with the

appropriate interventions and support, individuals can be successful in school, the workplace, and even in their relationships. Learning disabilities may include problems with perception of space or sounds, or of numbers or letters. forming letters, processing memory, attention disorders, motor coordination, following verbal directions, or separating literal from metaphorical ideas. Students who are intellectually or developmentally disabled (IDD) have below-average intelligence, which affects their ability to learn. Students with learning disabilities can learn but consistently perform below the level of their intelligence. When people think of “learning disabilities in the classroom”, they often think of Attention deficit-hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Although several students are affected by ADHD, that is not the only learning disability students face. Learning disabilities can interfere with basic learning skills such as math, reading, and writing. It is very important for teachers and the students guardians to realize that learning disabilities can affect an individuals life beyond academics and can impact their realtionships with peers, family, and even friends. Most learning disabilities are diagnosed when difficulties doing basic learning skills are recognized. Learning disabilities can not be fixed so it is considered a life long challenge. However, with the appropriate interventions and support, individuals can be successful in school, the workplace, and even in their relationships. Learning disabilities may include problems with perception of space or sounds, or of numbers or letters. forming letters, processing memory, attention disorders, motor coordination, following verbal directions, or separating literal from metaphorical ideas. Most of these students can learn strategies and techniques to help their underdeveloped skills.

Many students may face problems socially. Crowded classrooms can be a huge distraction for students with disbailities. A teacher might not give that student the needed

attention because the teacher will have several other student to look after and help. Students often shy away from participating in group interactions.

Having a conference with the teacher, the student and their guardian(s) is a very good way to get the parent involved and get an understanding of what is happening in the classroom. The conference idea is to teach the parent ways they can help the student at home. The conference can be formatted upon what the specific child's needs may be. This way, the child would know that the conference is personalized for them. The child can express their problems and what they need to work on, same with the parent and the teacher as well as learn facts about the disability. A counselor could also be a part of the conference as another adult figure to help lead and give advice for how the teacher and guardian(s) can help accompany the child. The conference enables them to understand the weaknesses and strengths the disabilities may bring. The conference is a discussion, not a lecture; that'll encourage the student to be involved. Visuals such as pictures and videos should be included so that the child will remember the information being showed. The conference should begin with the emphasis that every student is smart and have many strengths that is not only classroom based. Having a learning disability doesn't define a person and that should be taught to them. The only difference is that they learn differently. The weaknesses the student faces should be discussed in detail. Examples for how the weaknesses can improve should be provided. Conferences should be provided at least four times throughout the school year to see the amount of progress that has been made and what could be fixed or continued.

The regular education teacher is required to deal with multiple factors including an increasing number of students with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, developmental

variations, disabilities, family and social problems, and large class size. Many regular education teachers are not prepared to provide the kinds of instruction that benefit a wide diversity of students in the classroom. The characteristics of individuals with learning disabilities and the ways in which they interact with certain demands are not understood by all school administration or staff. Teachers often are required to adhere a certain curriculum and materials, and may not have the flexibility to address the unique needs of students with learning disabilities. Adequate support services, materials, and technology often are not available for either the teacher or the student with learning disabilities. Time and support for the continuous planning and assessment that are needed to make adjustments in students' programs and services often are inadequate. Schools rarely have a comprehensive plan to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and services for students with learning disabilities, especially those served in regular educational classrooms.

### Results

There are several ways a teacher can help a student with learning disabilities succeed inside and outside of the classroom. A teacher can build a relationship with the student and building a relationship can help the student open up and feel comfortable in his/her environment. Extending instructional time is very beneficial for learners who grasp new techniques more slowly. Individual teacher and student time should be made more available to students. This way, the teacher can individually see and understand where the problems are and better identify the challenges. Although providing video links for students to watch on their own time sounds like a good idea, it's not always a good idea. Student's who live in low-income households may not have the access to internet or technology. Every student learns differently and some students may learn the best face to face rather than someone speaking to them through a computer. A student



with a learning disability could have lots of trouble understanding what is being taught online especially if the content isn't being thoroughly explained well enough. Schools have dealt with internet access as a concern for students and have come to the idea to increase computer time for students that need it throughout the school day. One student who has limited time at home because of a long bus route commits time to watch most of his school lessons on his cell phone as he rides home. This is a great example of a student using their time wisely. The student doing school work on the bus will save him a lot of time from having to do school work when he gets home. It is essential for teachers to master technology to provide great lessons and learning activities for students. Some students with learning disabilities may need extra help with using their time effectively. With teachers and parents all on board, it will help the student succeed in and outside the classroom.

Dealing with learning disabilities can be very tough but what we don't want to do is fail our students. Learning disabilities can make school a thousand times harder than it already is but the proper interventions, support, and strategies needs to be put in place. Very strict parents who are overly tough on their student could make the student tense, feel fearful, and very overwhelmed. This is not the type of pressure that a student with learning disabilities should feel from anyone. A parents job is to be there for their child. If a child sees their parentt stressing or worrying then they will start to do the same as well. If a parent can't envision what's possible then the child never will. Everything a parent does can either affect the child for the better or for the worst. Parents, teacher, or anyone dealing with a child that has a learning disability should have a lot of patience. Parents needs to let the child know that it is okay to make mistakes and you won't understand everything right then and there. Parents should express their emotions less

and acknowledge the struggles their child might be facing. Parents should fully believe in their child no matter what. Progress doesn't come easy but setting the right intentions will help keep you on the right path. Partnering with the students teachers and a counselor can help develop effective strategies can help the students personal and academic growth. With the right support, students with learning disabilities can feel way more confident than they possibly did before because of that needed support that will push them. Parents who partners with their childs teachers can help the child take ownership and become stronger in the learning process. Parents should stay very involved in their childs school work whether they have a learning disability or not. Being a parent that is involved creates a much more calming environment which will help the student feel even more comfortable. It is normal to fear failure. If a parent has a positive attitude then their child will carry the same attitude. Children look up to their parents. Parents should take a huge step in being involved with their childs education. Many students who suffer from learning disabilities probably aren't comfortable speaking about their problems. It is the parents job to make their child feel that comfort and help them do their best. Modify assignments/ breaking tasks into smaller steps

- For writing; writing prompts
- For reading; listening to read alouds on technology (ipads, laptops, desktops, cassette player...etc)
- Show examples
- Provide small group instruction
- Hands on learning
- "Peer buddy"
- Technology

Technology has taken a huge toll on our learning system in the past few years. Most schools have laptops, desk tops, and what more schools are gaining access of are iPads. Apple products are very popular. It is very rare to go anywhere without seeing someone with an Apple product whether it be an iPhone, iPad, Apple watch, or Mac Book. One of the most popular tools that are used in classrooms are iPads. For students with learning disabilities, iPads can work as a translation and communication device. Every teachers teaching style is different and everyone learns things differently. For any student, iPads can be very useful to help learn something or better understand something that was taught. The web is filled with many different ways to learn things involving helpful apps. Touch technology such as iPads are very easy to use because the only tool you need are your fingers to tap on the screen. The iPad is easy for students with motor impairments to use and is an effective way to improve ones motor skills. What might seem like a simple task to one student may seem like a much challenging task to another. This is very overwhelming to students with learning disabilities and can lead to a lot of frustration. Ipads are a big help because the App store has a wide range of different apps. There is at least one app for almost every skill out there. If a student is struggling with one skill, there is an app that can help them feel way more confident in that skill. Ipads are really good for customizing how one wants to learn. Some peope learn better hands on while others learn better visually. Some students may have problems speaking so there are options and apps on an iPad to help a child feel more comfortable doing basic things. Ipads aren't just about translating the classroom for students with learning disabilities but also provides access to learning specialists. The list can go on and on but iPads can do way more than we realize. Ipads are great tools for students with learning disabilities because it can be considered an outlet for them. Not every student is open about the

challenges they face on a daily basis but with the help of technology, it can help students feel more comfortable and help them learn different classroom skills better. Ipads can alter a students learning disability experience for the better. There is at least one app for almost every skill out there. If a student is struggling with one skill, there is an app that can help them feel way more confident in that skill. Ipads are really good for customizing how one wants to learn. Some people learn better hands on while others learn better visually. Some students may have problems speaking so there are options and apps on an iPad to help a child feel more comfortable doing basic things. Ipads aren't just about translating the classroom for students with learning disabilities but also provides access to learning specialists. The list can go on and on but iPads can do way more than we realize. Ipads are great tools for students with learning disabilities because it can be considered an outlet for them.

Taking online classes or having an online tutor can be a huge help. Online teachers can teach you things that a teacher wouldn't be able to. Online, you will be the only person a teacher or tutor is helping out so a student with learnign disabilities can get all of the quality time that they might need to help them succeed inside of the classroom. Parents can also get involved in digital learning. Parents can monitor and help the student if he needs some extra help with something and be the support system that the student will need. Parents needs to have plenty of patience and shouldn't lose their cool in front of their chid. No matter if the student has a learning disability or not, a student who really want to make use of the time given will use that time to catch up on work or ask questions to better understand work. A study guide review session can be very beneficial to help students review before tests. Games are fun and a great way to help students interact with each other. Playing review games are fun and will help

students remember content more. Oral testing is a really good way for students with learning disabilities to test easy especially if the answers can be given from the student as well. It may take students with learning disabilities to process directions on a worksheet or directions for a test. A teacher reading the directions for the whole class will help students better understand what their job is and what is needed from them. Extra time to complete tasks should be given. It may take a child with learning disabilities more time than other students to understand what is needed from them and completing class work. If a quiz or test isn't finished during the time that was given, extra time such as during lunch or after school should be given. This will give the student and teacher alone time so that the student can get all of the teachers time to help understand the topics. The best type of testing for students with learning disabilities is to connect answers by drawing lines. Letting the online instructor know which learning disability the student may suffer with is very essential so the instructor will know to have the proper patience. Some students might find that online learning helps them hide the fact that they have a learning disability so they find the online learning world as an escape for them. Openness and constant communication can really have students with learning disabilities learn in online classrooms. Giving feedback to students is a great way to keep the communication space open. Giving feedback can greatly benefit students with and without learning disabilities. Special accommodations should include extending deadlines for work and working individually with a student. Students who need extra time initially receives it and gets work done on time. Students who take online classes that suffer with learning disabilities usually have the most difficulties doing work that is mainly text based. Seeing a lot of words can be a bit overwhelming. If a student finds text based work too overwhelming, there are several software products that can read

texts aloud. Instructors do not always have the ability to alter course design to accommodate students with learning disabilities, but instructional designers should pay attention to course elements that might be problematic for some students. Online school work and instruction can be very beneficial for any student whether they have a learning disability, or they just want to better understand certain skills. Online classes should accommodate that child for their certain needs especially if they suffer with learning disabilities.

In the actual classroom, teachers can better prepare students with learning disabilities and assure that they are prepared for upcoming tests and understand the instruction that was taught. Teachers can free up time during their lunch period as a study hall. No matter if the student has a learning disability or not, a student who really want to make use of the time given will use that time to catch up on work or ask questions to better understand work. A study guide review session can be very beneficial to help students review before tests. Games are fun and a great way to help students interact with each other. Playing review games are fun and will help students remember content more. Oral testing is a really good way for students with learning disabilities to test easy especially if the answers can be given from the student as well. It may take students with learning disabilities to process directions on a worksheet or directions for a test. A teacher reading the directions for the whole class will help students better understand what their job is and what is needed from them. Extra time to complete tasks should be given. It may take a child with learning disabilities more time than other students to understand what is needed from them and completing class work. If a quiz or test isn't finished during the time that was given, extra time such as during lunch or after school should be given. This will give the student and teacher alone time so that the student can get all of the teachers time to help

understand the topics. The best type of testing for students with learning disabilities is to connect answers by drawing lines. For the students who are victims with struggling with spelling, spelling tests should not be graded. The student can complete their spelling homework and take the test along with the rest of the class but the teacher might want to put either a smiley face or a stamp on the test and leave it ungraded. This way the student is still exposed to the spelling. It also helps the student feel included in the classroom and keeps the self-esteem high. Students struggling with reading should not be forced to read out loud in front of the class. This will cause extreme embarrassment for the student. If this is necessary such as being part of a play or skit in class, the student should be warned ahead of time and shown exactly which passage they will have to read so that they can practice it ahead of time. If the student raises their hand and wants to read then of course the student should be given that opportunity to read. For students who read below expected levels, audio books, talking books, educational videos and films can help provide the general information that the student is unable to acquire from the textbook. The student should be allowed to use any technology tools that the parent is willing to buy to work around their challenge areas. For students with short-term memory problems a table of facts or a calculator could be provided. For students whose handwriting is slow, illegible and includes many reversals an audio recorder or a computer with word processing software could be used for written work.

### Conclusion

It isn't wise to underestimate a student based on their learning disabilities. You shouldn't underestimate the intelligence and potential for success of students with a learning disability and other disabilities. Learning disabilities are not indicative of low intelligence. Some of the most

daunting disabilities have been overcome by some of the world's most successful people. Students with learning disabilities will be able to learn better as long as teachers and parents put in that extra step to help the child succeed. Finding the necessary help needed for students who suffer with learning disabilities can help make them feel more comfortable in their environments. Parents should be a student's number one supporters. Yes, having a learning disability might be tough but we all face obstacles in life that aren't easy. There are always new things that are being invented to help us do things easier. Life is a journey and it is what you make it. Being a student with learning disabilities and believing in yourself is key. No matter how hard things may be, giving up is never an option. Teachers must be very supportive of their students as well to keep them on the right track. As long as both the teacher and parents communicate and accommodate the student's needs to help them, the student will succeed.

I attest that this work is mine.



# AP<sup>®</sup> RESEARCH 2018 SCORING COMMENTARY

## Academic Paper

### Sample: 1

#### Score: 1

The paper earned a score of 1 because it is a discussion of a broad topic with no research method; though it does pose a research question, this question will not reasonably be answered in a paper of this sort. The paper identifies this question on page 1, paragraph 1: “What are ways to help students with learning disabilities in the classroom? How can teachers provide the extra help needed for success?” The “qualitative method” mentioned on pages 1 and 2 involves “... speaking with some students and asking them things ...” (page 2, paragraph 1) and is defended simply by stating: “I enjoy asking a lot of questions to understand things ...” (page 2, paragraph 1). The balance of the paper consists of an extensive informal discussion of the topic focusing on the student's own suggestions for improving the performance of learning disabled students in the classroom.

The paper did not score a 0 because it identifies a clear topic of investigation.

The paper did not score a 2 because it fails to engage any background literature in its discussion (and, thus, does not qualify as a “Summary” paper), and it refers to no outside sources. In addition, its method is so vague as to render it unreasonable.