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Make Beliefs Comix

This site was created as a place to find templates to create your own comic strips. Users can create their own comic, panel by panel. The site offers backgrounds, characters, text or thought bubbles, and other options to add. It is quick, easy, and fun to use! There are lots of ways to use this site. One of the most promising uses is to create social stories. Social stories are great ways to teach social skills and

teachers are often left to create these social stories on their own. This website provides a simple and effective way to create these stories. Higher functioning students can even make their own comic strip social stories as part of a reflection on their actions.

Another use for this site is to encourage written expression in reluctant writers. Graphic novels are very popular. Students could use this site to create their own graphic story. There are also writing prompts, pintables, lesson plans, free ebooks, disability specific information, and an ideas exchange section available on the website. The site design is not necessarily visually appealing, but it works for its intended purpose. I made the three panel strip below in less than 5 minutes using the Create Comix Demo. (www.makebeliefscomix.com)



(Disclaimer: The IEP Fairy is a fictional character created solely for this comic. Sorry to disappoint).

AppSpotlight - Symbol -It (Price: currently free, but typically > \$100)

This app gives you access to print symbols from various communication tools including Boardmaker and LAMP. All you have to do is speak or type into the program and it translates your words into symbols. This is useful for students who need picture cues or who are working toward using an AAC device. You can quickly and easily create visuals to support learning or communication.



"If we teach today's students as we taught yesterday's, we rob them of tomorrow." - John Dewey

Colored Overlays

Colored overlays and lenses are currently trending topics in the community and on social media. Although the use of colored lenses and overlays is controversial, colored overlays are an allowable presentation accommodation for students with disabilities in the state of Georgia. Accommodations must be selected on the basis of the individual student's needs and must be used consistently for instruction and assessment. While there is no conclusive scientific evidence to support the use of colored overlays, anecdotal reports indicate that students often express a preference for using overlays. To allow for these preferences, an informal assessment can be completed to determine if a student prefers a certain color overlay for reading. This preference may make a difference in the way a student feels about the material, their confidence, or their level of comfort when reading. This may lead to positive effects for the student. Use of colored overlays is not an intervention and should not be used in place of evidence based instructional strategies. However, they can be used as a support for students.

How to determine which color (if any) is best for a student:

1. Provide a printed passage on the student's instructional level.
2. Place the overlays on the passage with the glossy side down and have the student read a line of the text.
3. Ask the student questions about the experience. Questions could include:
 - Does this help you see the page better?
 - Is the print easier to read?
 - Tell me what you see, is it any different for you?
 - Are the words clearer?
 - Do your eyes feel more comfortable?
4. Eliminate colors without positive responses and use the process of elimination to determine the preferred color. You can put two overlays side by side on the page for comparison in order to determine the preferred color.
5. It may also be helpful to watch the student's body language, behavior, and posture.

Remember, if a student uses a colored overlay you should document it in the IEP on the student support page under the Instructional Accommodations section. If the student is only using the overlay for printed material it should not be documented on the State Testing page of the IEP as Milestones testing is administered online. You can add it to the Classroom Testing Accommodation section if the student uses the overlay for printed testing material in the classroom.

For more information regarding AT please contact Alison Parker (alparker@tcjackets.net) or

visit the Thomas County Assistive Technology webpage by scanning the QR code:

