



Sizing Up Software: Insuring Software Meets Your Expectations

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Software can be an important tool in supporting educational goals and objectives for students in all learning environments. When selecting software, it is important to consider the following:

- Does your computer meet ALL of the system requirements? For some software, it is especially important to check the sound card compatibility.
- Does your hard drive have enough available space to install the program?
- What are the licensing limitations of the software?
- Will you need administrative rights to access/customize the software?
- What are the objectives for the student's use of the program? What curriculum area does it address?
- What are the prerequisite skills required to use the program successfully? (i.e. use of a mouse, knowledge of the keyboard)
- Does the software allow alternate access? (i.e. Touch Screen, switch access)
- How does the program present information and reinforcement (i.e. text only, graphics, animation, color, music, speech only, sound effects)? Is the student motivated by the program?
- Does the student have a medical condition that would prohibit their use of the program? (i.e. visual impairment, seizure disorder)
- Can the teacher customize the software for individual students?
- Does the software allow teachers to track student progress?
- Does the manufacturer have demonstration disks available or free downloads on their website? What is their return policy? (many manufacturers offer a 30-day money back guarantee)
- Should the student have access to the software at home?
- Is the software easy to use?
 - Are the directions clear and understandable?
 - Does the software have user controls for independent review of directions/help?
 - Does it allow additional trials for incorrect responses?

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