Font Size and Style in Educational Materials

All students need to have access to educational materials that are easy to read. For students with visual impairments there are specific font size and style considerations all teachers should know about.

Font Sizes in Textbooks and Student Readers

As students progress from one grade level to another, the print size gets smaller. Students with visual impairments may have more difficulty accessing print in later grades as the print size decreases.

Below are font samples for pre-kindergarten through 8th grade with sentences pulled from leveled readers.

Pre-Kindergarten - Size 28 Font

Yellow yarn. Yellow yarn. Yellow yarn!

Kindergarten - Size 20 Font

We got red spots on the pot.

1st Grade - Size 18 Font

Yellow fish jumps up to eat a bug.

2nd Grade - Size 14 Font

I got a goldfish to play with me.

3rd-4th Grade - Size 12 Font

Did you know that minor earthquakes happen on Earth every day?

5th Grade - Size 10 Font

Despite such early failures, people refused to give up on the idea of human flight.

6th-8th Grade - Size 8 Font

Rip currents are created by the movement of water as it gathers at the shoreline, following the wake of a crashing wave.
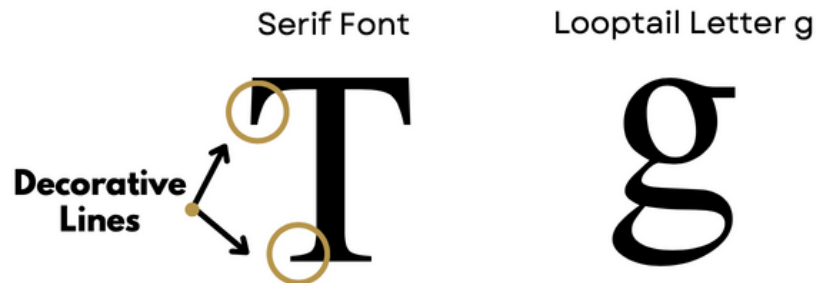
Font Styles in Educational Materials

Choosing an easy to read font is important for students with visual impairment. While some find sans serif fonts easier to read than serif fonts, there is no consensus. For students with visual impairments, it's important to work with their teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI) to determine the best font style & size for each individual student.

Serif Fonts

Serif fonts include decorative lines that can increase blur. An additional barrier to reading print in a serif font is that some letters are styled differently in a serif font than sans serif or handwritten. The letters T and g are used below as examples.

Popular Serif Fonts Include:
Times New Roman
Garamond
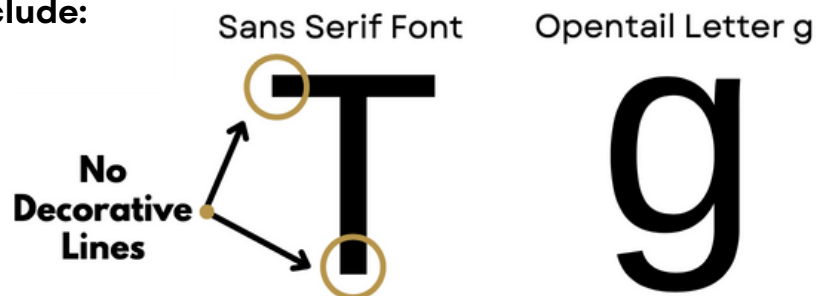Didot

Serif Font

Looptail Letter g

Decorative Lines

Sans Serif Fonts

Sans serif fonts do not include decorative lines. Sans serif fonts can be more visually accessible for some students.

Popular Sans Serif Fonts Include:
Calibri
Helvetica
Open Sans
Arial

Sans Serif Font

Opentail Letter g

No Decorative Lines

Decorative Fonts

Decorative fonts can be hard to read for all students.

Sample   SAMPLE   Sample   Sample

Want to know more about font styles and readability? Check out <u>this resource</u>.

Sampled Texts

Pre-Kindergarten
Englebretson, R. (2000). Yellow Yarn. Modern Curriculum Press.

Kindergarten
Bliss, J., & Wummer, A. (2000). Spots. Modern Curriculum Press.

1st Grade
Lotito, I., & Frankenberry, S. (2013). In the Lake. Pearson / Scott Foresman.

2nd Grade
McCoy, D. B. (1996). I Got a Goldfish. Silver Burdett Ginn.

3rd - 4th Grade
Dougias, V. (2005). The Amazing Geography of the West. Pearson / Scott Foresman.

5th Grade
Korb, R. (2007). The Story of Flight. Pearson / Scott Foresman.

6th - 8th Grade
Brelsfoard, S. (2007). Swimming Safely. Pearson / Scott Foresman.

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