

How technology can help learners with IDD

FLEXIBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY PLAY THE STRONGEST ROLES IN NEW PROGRAM SUCCESS

As technology continues to reach a wider audience for educational purposes, it's important to examine the broader landscape of online learning, identify ways learners can engage with it, explore the effectiveness of microlearning, and understand why we should use it more for learners with intellectual and developmental disabilities.



Research has shown, that flexibility and accessibility provide the strongest role in developing and accessing online learning.¹ The flexibility of online courses allows students to take control of their learning through scheduling, pacing, self-regulation, attention, and navigation.

Adult students with disabilities prefer the online environment to the traditional classroom format for a variety of reasons. Studying online gives students with disabilities time and space to work and learn.² Educators are also noticing how students with disabilities miss less and engage with the material on a deeper level because of remote learning options.³

Personalizing learning experiences enhances student engagement with online learning. This can be achieved by allowing students to choose the topics they are interested in and the resources they would like to use. Additionally, introducing rewards and recognition for students who actively participate in the online learning platform can also be helpful. This can be done with certificates and other rewards along with in-app recognition of achievements.⁴

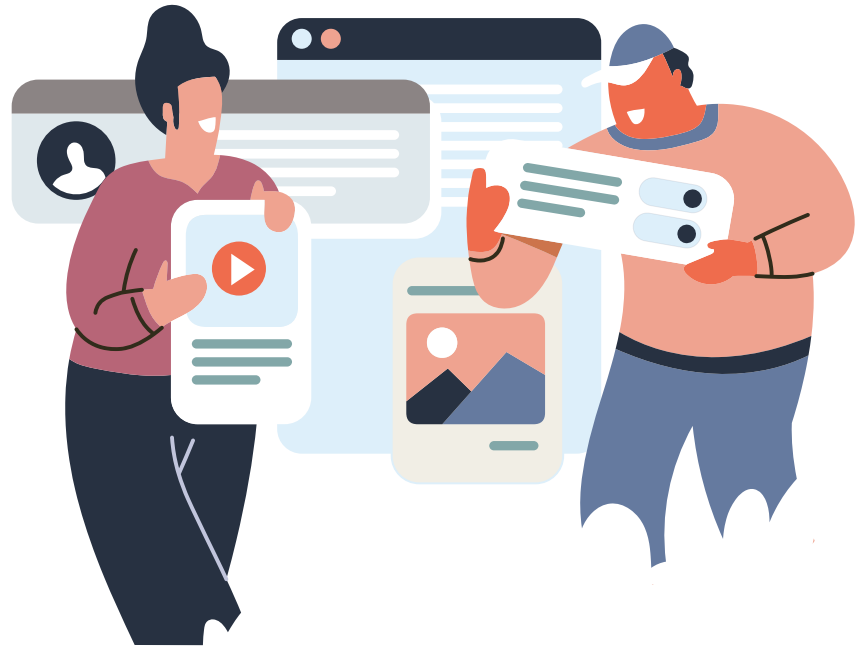
Because all learners and disabilities are not the same, teachers can customize individual learning paths and learning spaces easily with person-centered, online learning.⁵

THERE IS ROOM FOR INNOVATION

By applying the principles of universal design to the LearningQ platform, we challenged some traditional approaches to learning. Breaking down concepts into smaller chunks for better understanding, repetition, and retention creates a microlearning environment that has been proven successful.

Creating a simple and intuitive design ensures easy understanding, regardless of user experience, knowledge, language skills, or concentration level.⁶

The LearningQ platform offers learners a personalized experience by providing them with short, skill-based videos that are followed by three knowledge-based questions. The learners can watch the videos multiple times and choose which skills they want to work on, based on their preassigned tasks.



In a recent national study funded by NIDILRR and SBIR, LearningQ found:

A sharp increase in skills development from the pre-assessment to the post-assessment, from **78% to 99%** correct.

A 97% completion rate, including passing the quiz, once an active user started a video. The average user **watched between 5 and 21 videos per week**.

Waitlist reduction: One of the participating agencies developed a virtual training program around the Workforce Basics content and drew learners from across the country. This can eventually lead to a shorter wait time for services and more individuals getting the support they need to lead more independent lives.

Qualitative feedback from instructors included: content aligned with their instruction goals, learners loved “doing” what they were taught (cooking), and the ability to rewatch videos was a huge help.

Learners actively and consistently engaged with the LearningQ platform over other learning options.

WHERE THIS CAN GO

How can we foster environments for new ideas, experimentation, innovation and minimize risk adversity? We have found most organizations have the opportunity to create new spaces for more modern, and contemporary learning. This means saying “yes” or “why not?” to trying out new technologies. Barriers to learning consistently have been reported and collected on coaches and direct service providers adversity to engaging with technology.

In the daily living device-purpose area, respondents mainly reported that no one trained them to use their current device (42.9%).⁷ Our data shows users will engage with online tools and microlearning is effective for skills training.

Utilizing microlearning via LearningQ skills training can:

Reduce stress on staff commitments and provide flexibility with their coaching time

Reduce waitlists for services

Meet learners where they are in their skills development needs

Provide higher successful outcomes with skills development

Improve pre-teaching and practice at-home resources



Appendix

1. ies.ed.gov/ncee/rel/Products/Region/midatlantic/Blog/30160
2. elearningindustry.com/5-benefits-of-elearning-for-disabled-students
3. www.washington.edu/doit/tutorial-making-online-learning-accessible-students-disabilities
4. sites.ed.gov/osers/2016/08/idea-opportunities-and-challenges-in-online-settings/
5. www.accessibility.com/blog/how-remote-learning-options-benefit-students-with-disabilities
6. www.hurix.com/what-are-the-biggest-challenges-facing-online-education-today
7. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3990586/