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## ACADEMIC DIFFICULTIES AND ADHD

(by John F. Taylor, Ph.D.)

*The most common areas of difficulty for ADD students are:*

- **Reading:** comprehending and decoding printed letters, letter combinations, and words; understanding words and numbers; reading words accurately; understanding written directions.
- **Math:** performing calculations and conducting arithmetic reasoning; keeping rows and columns of numbers straight; avoiding confusion about placement of decimals; understanding abstract concepts involved.
- **Writing:** performing the mechanical task of cursive or printed writing; organizing and expressing ideas.
- **Thought processing:** understanding; organizing; prioritizing; symbolizing; remembering; restating thoughts, awarenesses, and knowledge in similar words.
- **Attention focusing:** sustaining attention; blocking out distractions; persisting in tasks; avoiding daydreaming.
- **Visual memory:** remembering what something looks like, especially letters and numbers; remembering sequences visually; remembering written symbols used to communicate information.
- **Prioritizing:** selecting the main idea in reading, listening, or writing; emphasizing what is important to include in written compositions; discarding unimportant ideas; drawing conclusions without being told what to think.
- **Bridging:** remembering more than two things or instructions at once; understanding similarities between ideas and things; relating one fact or event to another; time awareness
- **Decoding:** comprehending what is read; repeating back an understanding of what someone else just said; understanding comparisons, poetry, and other abstract concepts; connecting cause with effect; understanding math concepts (greater than, less than, multiplying); recognizing oneness of objects, symbols, and words with separate identities; understanding that a mark sound or pattern represents an object or an idea (e.g. "?").