



Free informational handouts for educators, parents, and students

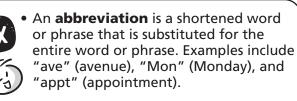
Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Initialisms - Oh My!

by Rynette R. Kjesbo, M.S., CCC-SLP

We've all seen those medical shows on television in which doctors burst into the emergency room demanding BPs, CBCs, PTs, PTTs, EKGs... "STAT!" While it makes for a very dramatic episode, there probably aren't many people who can really say that they understand exactly what the doctor is asking for.

Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Initialisms - What's the Difference?

Abbreviations, acronyms, and initialisms are all shortened forms of words or phrases used in place of whole words or phrases. Examples include: "misc" (miscellaneous), "ASAP" (as soon as possible), and "USA" (United States of America). We usually use them to speed up writing/reading, to make messages less wordy/easier to read, or to make text fit in a limited amount of space. While abbreviations, acronyms, and initialisms are often collectively referred to as "abbreviations," there are some differences.



• An **acronym** is a word that takes the place of a phrase. It is made from the beginning letters of each word in the phrase. An acronym can be read like a word. Examples include "PIN" (personal identification number), "BOGO" (buy one, get one), and "YOLO" (you only live once).

rof

 An initialism is also made from the beginning letters of each word in a phrase, however, unlike an acronym, an initialism is not read like a word. It's read by saying each letter individually. Examples include "UFO" (unidentified flying object), "FAQ" (frequently asked questions), and "ROFL" (rolling on the floor, laughing).



Abbreviations, Acronyms, Initialisms... and IEPs

When attending your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting or reading your child's IEP, you may read and hear a LOT of abbreviations, acronyms, and initialisms (hereby collectively referred to as "abbreviations" - Whew! That's so much easier! LOL). Sometimes the IEP meeting might sound a lot like that doctor who dramatically bursts into the ER. When abbreviations are used, the people using them assume that everyone knows what they mean, but that's not always the case. During an IEP meeting, it is essential for you to understand what is being said. If you hear or read something that isn't familiar to you, write down unfamiliar words/abbreviations/definitions, ask questions, and take notes. We've listed abbreviations often used in special education on the next page. You might find it helpful to keep a copy with you during your child's IEP meeting.





(cont.)

Common Abbreviations in Special Education

- 2e Twice Exceptional
- AAC Augmentative and Alternative
- Communication ABA Applied Behavioral Analysis
- ACEs Adverse Childhood Experiences
- **ADA** Americans with Disabilities Act
- **ADHD** Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
- **ADLs** Activities of Daily Living
- **AE** Adaptive Equipment
- **APD** Auditory Processing Disorder
- APE Adaptive Physical Education
- ASD Autism Spectrum Disorder
- ASL American Sign Language
- AT Assistive Technology
- AYP Adequate Yearly Progress
- BCBA Board Certified Behavior Analyst
- BD Behavior Disorder
- **BIP** Behavior Intervention Plan
- **CAPD** Central Auditory Processing Disorder
- CBA/CBM Curriculum Based Assessment/Measurement
- CBI Community-Based Instruction
- CCC Certificate of Clinical Competence
- CCSS Common Core State Standards
- CD Communication Disorder
- **CEC** Council for Exceptional Children
- COTA Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant
- CPS Child Protective Services
- CST Child Study Team
- DCD Developmental Coordination Disorder
- **DD** Developmental Delay or Developmental Disability
- DHH/DHOH Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- DME Durable Medical Equipment
- DNQ Did Not Qualify
- **DSM-V** Diagnostic Statistical Manual (5th edition) **DX** Diagnosis
- **EBD** Emotional Behavioral Disability
- EI Early Intervention
- **ELA** English Language Arts
- ELL English Language Learner
- ESE Exceptional Student Education
- ESL English as a Second Language

- ESY Extended School Year FAPE Free Appropriate Public Education FBA Functional Behavioral Assessment FERPA Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act GE **General Education** Gifted and Talented GT HI Hearing Impairment HIPAA Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act IA Instructional Assistant ID Intellectual Disabilities IDEA Individuals with Disabilities Education Act IEP Individualized Education Program IFSP Individualized Family Service Plan Intelligence Quotient IQ Learning Disability LD LEA Local Education Agency LEP Limited English Proficiency Least Restrictive Environment LRE MDT Multidisciplinary Team NCLB No Child Left Behind Act **Oppositional Defiant Disorder** ODD Other Health Impairment OHI Orthopedic Impairment OI ΟΤ **Occupational Therapist** PBS **Positive Behavioral Supports** PECS Picture Exchange Communication System PLEP Present Levels of Educational Performance PT Physical Therapist PTA Physical Therapy Assistant **Response to Intervention** RTI SEL Social-Emotional Learning SI Sensory Integration **SLD** Specific Learning Disability SLI Speech/Language Impairment Speech-Language Pathologist SLP SLPA Speech-Language Pathology Assistant
- SPED Special Education
- SSI Supplemental Security Income
- **TBI** Traumatic Brain Injury
- VI Visual Impairment
- WC Wheelchair

For more FREE Handy Handouts®, go to www.handyhandouts.com