

Day
27**Prep & Plan**

Some tools and materials needed by students with unique learning profiles are readily available in the classroom. Others can be slapped together on the fly. Still others, however, need to be designed and assembled in advance. Use these tips and tricks to get the work done:

- ★ *Ask for what you need. Looking for a 3-D model of the human eye? A neon yardstick? A large-print version of *Stuart Little*? You never know! There may be teachers in the building who have exactly what you are seeking.*
- ★ *Look on Pinterest (www.pinterest.com) for inspiration. You will find downloadable materials, "hacks," and shortcuts for developing learning tools.*
- ★ *Involve all team members in the creation of learning materials. Speech pathologists may want to help in the creation of low-tech tools that foster interaction and collaboration between students. Occupational therapists may want to contribute games and activities that promote movement. Literacy specialists may be happy to help teams expand the materials used in reading and writing instruction.*
- ★ *Plan in advance for any downtime. Paraprofessionals may have segments of time in their day or week when they do not need to provide direct support. This may happen when all students are busy in a large-group activity, when they go to a whole-school event, or even when one or more learners are absent. Be ready for these moments. Assemble a bin of raw materials (e.g., contact paper, construction paper, duct tape) and directions for creating the learning tools you want but have not yet been able to create. Plan well and you will have that magnetic bone cell, those world explorer task cards, and that adapted version of Chapter 9 in the Spanish textbook, sooner rather than later.*