Empowering Independence

Teaching Students to Use ChatGPT for Creating and Checking Routes in Orientation and Mobility

Introduction

Orientation and Mobility (O&M) instruction supports independent travel for students with visual impairments. ChatGPT can serve as a digital assistant to help students:

- **Plan walking routes**
- **Check directions for accuracy**
- **Review bus and train schedules**

Using ChatGPT empowers students to take a more active role in their own travel planning and safety awareness.

Why ChatGPT for O&M?

- **Provides instant, text-based guidance**
- **Accessible with screen readers and voice input**
- **Encourages independence and problem-solving**
- **Allows students to double-check routes and receive safety reminders**

Creating Walking Routes

Students can use ChatGPT to generate and simplify walking directions.

Example Prompt:
“Give me walking directions from my school to the library.”

ChatGPT can:

- **Break down instructions into clear, manageable steps**
- **Provide estimated travel time**
- **Identify key landmarks or intersections**

Checking Routes for Safety

Students can ask ChatGPT to:

- **Confirm safe crossing locations**
- **Suggest alternative routes**
- **Verify distance and travel time**

Example Prompt:
“Check if my walking route from home to the park has sidewalks and crosswalks.”

Using ChatGPT for Bus Routes

ChatGPT can help students identify:

- Nearby bus stops
- Which bus to take to reach a destination
- Departure times and frequency of service

Example Prompt:

“What bus goes from Main Street to the mall, and how often does it run?”

Using ChatGPT for Train Routes

Students can:

- Locate train stations and connections
- Check transfer options
- Verify travel times or possible delays

Example Prompt:

“How do I get from Union Station to Central Park by train?”

Teaching Strategies for O&M Specialists

- Model effective prompts for walking, bus, and train routes
- Provide guided practice in real-world travel settings
- Combine ChatGPT with maps, tactile graphics, and GPS apps
- Reinforce the importance of verifying information using multiple tools
- Encourage safe and independent decision-making

Benefits for Students

- Builds confidence and independence in travel planning
- Strengthens technology and problem-solving skills
- Promotes self-advocacy and communication
- Offers accessible, instant feedback for route verification

Role of the O&M Specialist

O&M Specialists can support students by:

- Teaching how to phrase clear, specific prompts
- Demonstrating how to request and interpret routes
- Reinforcing real-world verification of AI-generated directions
- Integrating ChatGPT use into lesson plans and travel training

Sample Prompts for Students

• **“Give me walking directions from my school to the park using safe crossings.”**

• **“What bus do I take from Main Street to the library, and what time does it come?”**

• **“Show me a step-by-step train route from Union Station to the**

airport."
• "Check if my walking route has sidewalks and crosswalks."
• "What is the fastest way to get from my house to the grocery store by bus?"

Practice Activities

Let's Try a Walking Route
- Example: Olive Garden to Kroger, Alliance Town Center
- Try your own route request with ChatGPT.

Let's Try a Bus Route
- Example: Bus route from Clearfork Shops to the Fort Worth Stockyards

Let's Try a Train Route
- Example: Train route from American Airlines Center to the State Fair of Texas

Encourage participants to come up with student-friendly routes to explore.

Conclusion

ChatGPT is a valuable instructional tool in Orientation and Mobility training. It helps students:
- Create and review travel routes
- Practice independence in route verification
- Strengthen safety and problem-solving skills

By integrating ChatGPT into O&M instruction, we empower students to travel more confidently and independently.