

Strategies for Effective Teaching and Learning

Suggestions for Teaching Students With Hearing Impairments

Suggestion #1: Promote acceptance of your students.

Your student will benefit from a classroom where he or she feels accepted and where modifications are made without undue attention.

- Welcome the student to your class. Your positive attitude will help other students accept him or her.
- Discuss your student's hearing loss with him or her; let him or her know you are willing to help.
- As appropriate, have your student, the audiologist, or another person explain the student's hearing loss to your entire class.
- Make modifications seem as natural as possible so the student is not singled out.
- Accept your student as an individual; be aware of his or her assets as well as his or her limitations.
- Encourage your student's special abilities or interests.

Suggestion #2: Be sure hearing aids and other amplification devices are used when recommended. This will enable your student to use his or her hearing maximally.

- Realize that hearing aids make sounds louder, but not necessarily clearer. Hearing aids don't make hearing normal.
- Be sure your student's hearing aids or other devices are checked daily to see that they are working properly.
- Encourage the student to care for his or her hearing aid(s) by putting it on, telling you when it is not functioning properly, and so forth.
- Be sure your student always has a spare battery at school.
- Know whom to contact if your student's device is not working properly.

Suggestion #3: Provide preferential seating. Appropriate seating will enhance your student's ability to hear and understand what is said in the classroom.

- Seat your student near where you typically teach. It will be helpful if your student is at one side of the classroom so he or she can easily turn and follow classroom dialogue.
- Seat your student where he or she can easily watch your face without straining to look straight up. Typically the second or third row is best.

- Seat your student away from noise sources, including hallways, radiators, pencil sharpeners, and so forth.
- Seat your student where light is on your face and not in your student's eyes.
- If there is a preferred ear, place it toward the classroom.
- Allow your student to move to other seats when necessary for demonstrations, classroom discussions, or other activities.

Suggestion #4: Increase visual information. Your student will use speechreading and other visual information to supplement what he or she hears.

- Remember that your student needs to see your face in order to speechread!
- Try to stay in one place while talking to the class so your student does not have to speechread a "moving target."
- Avoid talking with your face turned downward while reading.
- Keep the light on your face, not at your back. Avoid standing in front of windows where the glare will make it difficult to see your face.
- Use visual aids, such as pictures and diagrams, when possible.
- Demonstrate what you want the student to understand when possible. Use natural gestures, such as pointing to objects being discussed, to help clarify what you say.
- Use the board—write assignments, new vocabulary words, key words, and so forth on it.

Suggestion #5: Minimize classroom noise. Even a small amount of noise will make it very difficult for your student to hear and understand what is said.

- Seat your student away from noisy parts of your classroom.
- Wait until all your students are quiet before talking to them.

Suggestion #6: Modify teaching procedures.

Modifications will allow your student to benefit from your instruction and will decrease the need for repetition.

- Be sure your student is watching and listening when you are talking to him or her.
- Be sure your student understands what is said by having him or her repeat information or answer questions.

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