

TIPS FOR TEACHERS

If you have a deaf or hard of hearing student in your class, there are some accommodations that are needed to improve chances of success. Many of these tips are already good teaching practices for all the students in the class. Some are common sense suggestions that if not pointed out are often overlooked. Having a deaf or hard of hearing student in a mainstream class can be a rewarding challenge. Please look over the following tips to help you accommodate their unique needs.

- Use special seating that allows the student to see the teacher and the other students as much as possible. Horseshoes and semi circles work well.
- Be sure only one person speaks at a time.
- Identify the speaker. Pointing to the person or calling the name works well. Some teachers use a "talking stick" to identify the speaker.
- Discipline the student as you would others in the class. Treat them equally.
- Write assignments on the board.
- Don't talk to the blackboard.
- Avoid standing in front of bright lights or windows when speaking. It puts you in dark shadow and makes it harder to see your face.
- Alert the student to new topics of discussion. Use phrases like "let's talk about now.", or " next topic" and pause for a few seconds.
- Use visual aids as much as possible.
- Realize that the deaf and hard of hearing student has a high level of fatigue just to listen. Listening demands an extreme amount of concentration and can be very stressful in itself. Add to that learning new things and the regular demands on a student in your class. They will tire much quicker. Provide frequent listening breaks that allow the student to work alone or take a break.
- Write new vocabulary on the board. Do this even if the student is a new or non proficient reader.
- Restate rather than repeat.
- Write important announcements on the board.
- Ask them to repeat if you do not understand them.
- Use the amplification equipment appropriately and consistently.
- Use captioned films and videos when showing videos. Many commercial videos are captioned. Educational videos may not be captioned. Subscribe to the FREE service from the National Captioning Institute to borrow captioned films from them. This takes some advances planning but is worth it. To create a FREE account, go to the [captioned media program site](#).
- Reinforce auditory instructions with visual or with restating information as needed.
- Regularly communicate needs, concerns and progress with parents and team members.

- Use study guides.
- Speak naturally. Don't speak louder or exaggerate words.
- Keep things simple.
- Avoid using incidental gestures that may distract the student's view of your face.
- Be flexible and encouraging.
- Remember that the deaf and hard of hearing student will learn things but may not learn in the same way as the other students. Be aware of misunderstandings.
- Address issues as they come up. Avoid letting things go.
- Provide lag time for the child to process what is heard. They may need a few seconds to get what is said in order to answer. This is especially true if an interpreter is provided.
- Summarize information especially in spontaneous situations.
- Use adequate lighting in the classroom.
- Remember the deaf or hard of hearing student does not have access to all the incidental learning in class. Teaching must be more direct.
- Facial hair distracts from speech reading.

****From the webpage of Serena Wunderlich:**

http://web1.newpaltz.k12.ny.us/local/high_school/Teachers/swunderlich/index.htm