



## TIPS FOR TEACHERS AND STAFF OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION STUDENTS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING (D/HH)

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The following are strategies that would be helpful to children who are D/HH. They will also be good communication strategies for anyone in your class.

1. **STRATEGIC SEATING.** Seat the student where s/he can watch your face without strain. Permit her/him to turn to watch the faces of others. This may necessitate a “roving” seat for some activities. S/he needs to see if s/he is to hear – and s/he must do both to learn in any class. If possible, seat her/him away from heavy traffic or sources of vibration so s/he won’t be distracted.
2. **USE AN APPROPRIATE LISTENING POSITION.** Use appropriate positions (face-to-face communication and close proximity to those listening) when teaching, and students will model your example.
3. **ENCOURAGE FACE-TO-FACE COMMUNICATION AND GOOD EYE CONTACT.** Provide specific instruction for all students to face each other, not covering their face with hands or paper and give eye contact when both speaking and listening.
4. **FACE THE STUDENT SO THE LIGHT IS ON YOUR FACE.** When you speak, avoid standing with your back to the windows. Looking into a glare makes it very difficult for a student to speechread and may cause eyestrain. Try not to talk with your back to the class while writing on the board. Talk from the back of the room only when the student can see your face and s/he is aware that you are speaking. Guard against the habit of covering your mouth with your hands, a book, or paper while you are talking.
5. **SPEAK NATURALLY** and do not exaggerate lip movements. If what you say is not understood, rephrase it, rather than repeating since some sounds/words are easier to speechread. Obtain feedback from your student to check understanding.
6. **A “BUDDY” IS A HELP TO THE STUDENT WHO IS D/HH AND TO YOU.** A capable student, seated near the student who is D/HH, could be appointed as a “buddy” to be sure assignments and directions are understood.
7. **IN GROUP SITUATIONS** you can help the student by encouraging students to talk one at a time, repeating spoken questions and comments, pointing to and identifying the speaker, and by controlling the pace of the discussion. Be aware that learning rote material (e.g., poems, song, etc.) in a large group setting is a problem for the student who is D/HH. The child may benefit from pre-teaching or individual assistance in these areas so that s/he can fully participate in group times.
8. **ESTABLISH POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARD THE CHILD WHO IS D/HH.** You are a model for the children in your class. Help the class to understand hearing and hearing differences by having specialists discuss communication, the ear, hearing, hearing differences, hearing conservation, personal amplification, assistive technology, Deaf Culture, sign language and other D/HH role models.
9. **PRAISE STUDENTS FOR CONTRIBUTING TO A QUIET LEARNING ENVIRONMENT.** This will be helpful for the whole class and will be more effective than reprimanding the class once the noise level has gotten too high.

Please feel free to call either the CASE audiology office or your district’s itinerant teacher (via the Director of Special Education) if you have any questions or concerns related to your student who is D/HH.