

General Courtesy in the Classroom for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students

(Note: all of these strategies will work on some of the students--some strategies will not. The degree of impairment and the background training of the student will affect the usefulness of the various strategies).

- Get the attention of a student with a hearing impairment before speaking and communicating and always face the student.
- If not facing a student with a hearing impairment, gently touch a student on the shoulder or on the arm to indicate that you want to talk to him/her.
- Do not be alarmed if the student does not understand and you cannot understand him/her. Generally, you will become accustomed to each other in time.
- When communicating, always face the student with a hearing impairment.
- Facial expressions, gestures, and other body language will help convey your message.
- For reinforcement repeat new vocabulary in different contexts.
- Sequence topics so that new material is related to that previously learned.
- The use of visual aids is most helpful since vision is the student's primary means of receiving information.
- Use written announcements (assignments, due dates, exam dates, changes in the class schedule, special event dates, etc.).
- If ambiguities or difficulties arise in the home concerning assignments or lessons, have the parents make a note of these difficulties. Follow-up in written detail.
- Provide an outline in advance of the lesson/activity to give to the student in advance, also list your expectations.
- Write all homework assignments, class instructions, and procedural changes on the chalkboard.
- Use captioned films, videos, and laser disks.
- Use interpreter where needed (see general strategies).
- Avoid seating the student in heavy traffic areas.
- Avoid vibrations and excessive noise.
- Make chalkboard notes legible.
- Do not talk while writing on chalkboard.
- Eliminate background noises. Sounds taken for granted and normally ignored by hearing individuals, are amplified by a hearing aid and interfere with the communication of the person who is hard of hearing.
- Get the attention of a person with a hearing impairment before speaking.
- If necessary, use written notes to communicate.
- Supplement audible alarm systems with simple visual alarms such as flashing lights.
- When teaching a student with a hearing impairment, ask where he/she would like to sit, in order to communicate in an optimal manner.