



TIPS FOR TEACHING A CHILD with a Cochlear Implant

Tips for the Teacher

- Maintain a communication notebook between school and home with regular entries.
- Talk naturally, not too fast or too slow.
- Project your voice, but do not shout.
- Do not talk with your back turned to the class.
- Try not to move around too much while talking.
- Make sure the child can see your face clearly when you are speaking.
- Make sure your classroom has adequate lighting.
- Be aware that the sunlight coming in through the windows can make lipreading and watching visual cues more difficult.
- Do not block your face with your hands, books, or other items while talking.
- Keep in mind that children hear best on their implant side.
- Come up with a fun, secret way your student can let you know they do not understand, such as putting a certain item on the desk or using a certain hand position.

Tips to Help Student Comprehension

- Clearly introduce a new topic when the subject of conversation is changing.
- Summarize key points given by classmates.
- Write words, dates, assignments, and other important information on the board.
- Provide a list of vocabulary or other assignments for the child to learn at home prior to class discussions.
- Point or say the name of each child who contributes to a discussion so the child can identify whom to focus on.
- Repeat or rephrase comments or questions to the entire class before responding or calling on another child.
- Use visual cues, such as body language and props, to allow the child a second opportunity to receive the message you are communicating.

Tips for Seating

- If possible, allow the child to have flexible seating so they can move to the optimal hearing location for different activities.
- Sit the child in front during assemblies.
- If the student uses an FM system, give the microphone to the person speaking.
- Seat children in a horseshoe or circle during group activities.
- Seat the child away from peers who are especially noisy.
- Seat the child away from windows.



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Tips for a Quieter Classroom

- Keep in mind that hard, smooth surfaces reflect sound and make listening more difficult.
- Use a carpeted classroom, if possible.
- Cover hard, reflective surfaces with sound-absorption materials such as cork boards and cloth hangings.
- Put tennis balls on chair legs that sit on hard surfaces.
- Put drapes on windows.
- Keep the classroom door shut to eliminate noise from the hallway.

Tips for Equipment Maintenance

- Identify one staff member who is responsible for doing a sound check of the cochlear implant as well as checking the FM system (if applicable) each morning.
 - Verify that the child’s sound processor is set appropriately, check the program number, volume, sensitivity, and battery charge status.
 - After the equipment function has been verified, perform a daily listening check using the Ling 6 sound test.
- Annual in-service training is recommended for all educators who work with the child regarding proper use and care of the child’s speech processor.
- If the child uses an FM system, remember to turn off your FM transmitter during classroom activities.

Additional Classroom Tips

- Teach the child to indicate if he/she does not understand and provide them with compensatory strategies to use, such as *I didn’t hear that* and *I don’t understand*.
- Teach ancillary staff members to notice indications of misunderstanding or confusion.
- Know that your child will appreciate every effort you make to help him/her in the classroom.
- Remember that a child with a cochlear implant typically has hearing thresholds between 20 and 45 dB HL across the speech frequencies, which does not mean he/she has normal hearing.