

ADAPTING AND DEVELOPING LEARNING MATERIALS FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING PUPILS

When teaching and preparing materials for deaf and hard of hearing children, the following principles must be followed and taken into account.

Individualisation

We need to have a good understanding of the specific learning conditions of each child. We have to take into account the following:

- hearing status,
- speech and language skills,
- communication mode (speech or sign language),
- physical and mental age,
- speech and language training duration,
- additional disabilities,
- ability to concentrate,
- age of the onset of hearing loss,
- emotional state,
- motivation to work.

Introducing learning material

When introducing new content to the learner, the following principles of progression should be observed:

- from near to far,
- from the known to the unknown,
- from easier to more difficult, and
- from simple to complex.

When choosing content, we also have to decide on the appropriate scope of the topic, the appropriate choice of words, sentences and texts. We should be careful to guide the learner from success to success.

Activity

The learner should be mentally and physically active during the learning process, visually focused on the content. Learning must be fun, we must use a lot of games, role plays, movement, elements of drama in education, interactive exercises and so on.

Frequent consolidation

Pupils who do not have hearing difficulties perceive concepts and hear the same words many times without paying much attention. We say that they "pick them up by accident". The deaf and hard of hearing only learn spoken concepts during guided learning, which is why it is so important to cover the same content over a longer period of time. This reinforcement replaces some of the incidental learning. The learner has to hear the word or concept several times to master it.

During the work, the understanding of the content needs to be continuously checked by asking open-ended questions.

Systematic approach

Learning, such as acquiring new concepts and building the language, requires a lot of attention and concentration from a deaf and hard of hearing child, which can only be achieved by directed work.

The systematic and orderly nature of directed work increases the learner's sense of security, but such work also quickly leads to fatigue. The teacher must therefore enrich the lesson by frequent changes of activity, interspersed with movement activities and free play.

Tips for creating own teaching materials for pupils who use Sign Language or sign-supported speech:

- make new material digital;
- make the materials in both languages: spoken and sign language (video and/or graphics);
- evaluate the individual pupil's competence in both languages: spoken and sign language – and use the strongest language to learn the other;
- add a sign language video to a known text (book, text book), it can be done with a mobile phone;
- teach the pupil how to read the sign-graphics;
- start the new content with illustrations and the use of visual representations;
- gradually transition from concrete to abstract thinking.