

## English education for disabled students

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**Introduction** Intellectually challenged student do have some obstacles but they are as interested as everyone else in learning English. We don't have any appropriate text books for each student in our school. We make big effort to maximize the learning potential and academic achievement of every student. The teacher in charge of the class has to create materials and make lesson plans. We check the ability of students and divide them into groups based on their abilities in each subject before we start teaching in April. And then we design and produce individual programs for each student.

The most important thing is that every student enjoys studying it so much, if they were in vacation, they would miss the school.

### The special characteristics of the disabled students

1) Each student has different advantages and disadvantages from general students.

They have many kinds of disability, for example Autism (closed mind), Down's syndrome, Mental illness, Epilepsy, ADHC and so on.

They have more difficulties learning than other students but they have on innocent love of learning.

2) Due to a student's refusal reaction in the class room, we cannot force the student to study. If we forced the student to study the subject, the student will panic.

3) Some students become obsessed with seemingly small things, but these things can be very important to them. For example, one of them collects insects and keeps them into a bottle. This behavior brings calms him. If we do not wait until he has finished, he will be very unstable.

4) There are between four and seven students in every group and at least two teachers. We need staff trained to deal with completely different disabilities and mental conditions. We have to respond quickly too many different situations and emergencies, especially those involving panic cases or spasms.

5) Some disabled students are remarkably imbalanced. For

example one of our students has on excellent memory but cannot relate meaningfully to others.

### Important things to teach English

I show the basic points to teach English.

- 1) Repeat the key sentence over and over again
- 2) Focus on the important sentence.
- 3) Practice English rhythm and intonation
- 4) Teach English in a relaxed atmosphere
- 5) Keep smiling
- 6) Praise publicly, criticize privately

1) & 2) We don't have to teach many important sentences at once. We focus on them and give them to the students. We should encourage the class to repeat the key sentences several times.

3) When we speak Japanese, we don't have any intonation whereas English is very rhythmical and natives speak English melodically. If students can get the rhythm of English, it is much easier to learn. I think listening to English is the first step to learning it, and build up our own English.

It is very effective to use some dances and music to teach English.

From this they can pick up the rhythm of English subconsciously.

4) We should create a relaxing atmosphere and a good environment for learning.

We should promote the fact that making mistakes is part of learning process and is nothing to be afraid of.

5) The teacher should applaud the student publicly when she/he answered correctly.

If he has a weak point, the teacher teaches him privately. Weak points should be addressed in a one-on-one situation.

### The effective method of teaching English

Students have many kinds of disabilities. We plan our class before we teach anything to the students.

1) Some are sensitive to smell, others to sound or sight etc. We should plan the class so that they can use the sense best for them.

2) As stated previously, music and dance are very effective ways to teach English. They remarkably make the students develop their English ability.

Time permitting; it would be very beneficial to stage small plays etc. for our studies to enjoy.

3) We should set the situation to help the students understand the class.

If you set the situation in the room, appropriately they can act with their purpose.

4) We should create the education style.

We sometimes change the room to learn English. For examples, music room, play room, out door, class room, cooking room, etc.

They can cook exercise or sing some songs with the ALT and class mates.

They should learn English from different angles.

### A L T (Assistant Language Teacher)

The ALTs have grown up in a different countries and culture, with their customs, food and lifestyles.

Their good points are that they speak with accurate and clear pronunciation and behave naturally.

We should not depend on the native speaker but we should use the native's speaking ability.

Most ALTs are not specialists in teaching English. They can speak English naturally but they don't have any know-how to teach it to the students.

For this the Japanese teacher should make plans to teach English to the students.

The two problems for Japanese teachers with teaching English in schools are

1) Teachers are afraid or shy to teach with English because they don't feel confident the language or can't be bothered with it.

2) I don't think the textbooks made by the government are perfect. We need to create and design the materials for use in each school.

English is a communication tool and it is very important we speak it every day.

The ALT comes to our school once a month, meaning the students cannot speak English often.

I would build on this however; both the teacher and students would have to use simple phrases everyday during class. It would take some time to get both the teacher and students used to this, but after a couple of weeks, English lessons should go by smoothly.

### Build the good relationship between teachers and parents

Every student has a notebook.

We send a note home to let parents know of their student's behavior every day and parents write down their opinions. We sometimes use the telephone to discuss with the parents about their children and the children's problems.

### Summary

Second language education increases a language and learning ability and positively heightens awareness of many cultures.

Both music and dance help the student to learn English and improve their intonation and pronunciation. The games bring enjoyment into the classroom to help them learn English. We have carefully to select music, language-learning tapes, and games for their educational benefit.

If you did not forget to watch your students and evaluate their English abilities correctly, you would design excellent plan to teach English for them.

If you keep plenty of efforts to teach English, they would love learning English.

Love your students and teach English to them.

### References

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