



TADOMA

Students who are deaf-blind frequently use their senses of touch and movement to get information about the activities, people and places around them. Students may be able to use several senses together (e.g., touch + hearing + movement) to build skills such as speech, use of remaining vision and/or hearing, and sign language. They may also use their senses of touch and/or movement for the sole purpose of enjoyment.

Objective

Tadoma is a method for teaching the student with dual sensory impairments to speak. The method was developed at Perkins School for the Blind for deaf-blind children. Tadoma also can be used to provide students with very pleasurable sensations of touch and movement which come from others' speech and singing which they cannot see or hear.

Hand placement

The hand of the student is placed on the face of the speaker with the thumb lightly placed on the speaker's lips and the fingers spread on the cheek and upper neck. In this way, the student feels the lip movement, air in the cheeks, and the vibration of the vocal cords as each sound is made. Sounds which look alike on the lips (e.g., "F" and "V") will feel differently on the speaker's face and throat. If the child has some vision, the adult should be positioned so the student can watch the adult's lips and facial expression. If the student wears hearing aids, it would be helpful to wear them at this time.

Procedure

1. Assist student with hand placement. A young child may need to use both hands.
2. Speak clearly and naturally.
3. Assist student to feel his own face and throat to encourage him to repeat the sounds just made by the adult.
4. Repeat steps one through three to encourage the student to imitate.
5. Do not force the student to join in the activity if he seems tired or uninterested. This method should be enjoyable for both the student and the adult.

Resources

1. Educational Beginnings with Deaf-Blind Children, Nan Robbins, 1960, Perkins Publication #21, Perkins School for the Blind, Watertown, Mass, 02172.
2. Speech Beginnings for the Deaf-Blind Child, Nan Robbins, 1963, Perkins Publication#22, Perkins School for the Blind, Watertown, Mass, 02172.

Fact sheets from California Deaf-Blind Services are to be used by both families and professionals serving individuals with dual sensory impairments. The information applies to students 0-22 years of age. The purpose of the fact sheet is to give general information on a specific topic. More specific information for an individual student can be provided through individualized technical assistance available from CDBS. The fact sheet is a starting point for further information.

Order #005

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