

# The classroom setting for the visually impaired

[Education](#), [School](#)



Providing a student-friendly classroom especially for those who are visually impaired is a great challenge for educational institutions, especially the teachers. It takes great effort for the teacher to establish a classroom setup that is suited for the needs, demands, and limitations of students with visual impairments. Consequently, it also takes much effort for visually impaired students to adapt themselves, especially in moving around the classroom.

Therefore, several arrangements and adjustments must be developed in order to offer students who are visually impaired and their families an assurance of quality learning and student-friendly classrooms that would facilitate the needs and limitations of their students. Moving around the classroom is one of the major issues involved when talking about the classroom setup and the visually impaired students. Certain physical changes or alterations to the classroom setup may be the ultimate answer in addressing this problem.

Students who are visually impaired may suffer different conditions such as partial or total impairment, nearsighted or farsighted, tunnel or peripheral vision, etc. (Fame, 2008) With these varied conditions and needs, and the classroom must be flexible enough to possess all that is necessary in accommodating students with varied visual impairments. From the beginning of classroom instruction, the classroom should already be set up for the students. From this day forward, the teacher should not make any changes to the set up of the classroom as changes or alterations may confuse the students, not to mention cause accidents. Center for Teaching and Learning, 2001)

Students who are visually impaired also utilize different instructional aids and equipments that help them adapt or accommodate themselves into the structure of the classroom. This includes walking sticks or canes, brailles, even guide dogs, etc. (Fame, 2008) The classroom should provide a vast space for these instructional aids and equipments, especially for guide dogs. Moreover, the classroom should be arranged in such a way that most of the students may sit in front of the class near the teacher.

This is helpful for them to hear what the teacher is saying, especially because visually impaired students are able to do their activities and follow instruction by listening to what the teacher is saying. Because of this, the classroom environments should be quiet enough to facilitate listening in the classroom. Doors should be closed in order to shut off unnecessary noise. Perhaps, the teacher may ask other students to refrain from making any unnecessary noise in order for the students to hear what the teacher is saying without any disruptions.

Center for Teaching and Learning, 2001) Other strategies that would be helpful in facilitating movement for the visually impaired is to arrange the seats in such a way that it nearest the door. In addition, the tables or chairs in the classroom should accommodate all the instructional aids and equipments in order to prevent the student from standing up to get what he needs during classroom instruction. Other school facilities, such as the comfort room, the school cafeteria, etc. should be nearest to the classroom. In addition, the classroom itself should be located in the ground floor of the building.

To facilitate the inclusion of the student with visual impairments in the class, the teacher should refrain from using visual aids in teaching. It is also a good idea if each lecture is taped and then provided for visually impaired students for them to be able to listen to lectures and discussions when needed. Being descriptive, rather than visual, during lecture or discussion would greatly help in making students understand what the lesson is all about. Moreover, classroom instruction should not involve any writing or other activities that are not suited for the visually impaired student.

Finally, inclusion is easily accomplished by setting up ways for social interactions within the classroom such as group discussions and group activities. Case Study: Is it Fair? 1. The major issue or problem in this case has something to do with language and culture. The Hernandez family badly wants their daughter, Rosa to undergo cochlear implants in order for her to hear again. However, doing so requires follow up after the implant, and that is attending oral classes in order to facilitate auditory and speech training. In this case, the school uses only English as the medium of instruction.

Therefore, they required the family to speak English at home for Rosa to be able to continue auditory and speech training even in the house. The Hernandez family refused. 2. The Hernandez family's devotion for their culture and language motivated them to refuse the offer. For Piedmont, they believed that follow up is necessary in order for children who underwent cochlear implants to maximize the auditory and speech skills after the operation. 3. I believe that it was unnecessary. There is such a term as bilingualism, and I think language is acquired through learning.

Therefore, it is possible for Rosa to learn English even if they do not speak it at home. The school should have suggested that they learn English especially because they are moving in the state, and not requiring them to entirely speak in English by force. 4. It is fair; however, since they are the only oral school available for children who have undergone cochlear implants, they should be open for other cultures as well. They should have anticipated that since they are the only one within the state, there would be other children who speak other languages who would be referred to their school.

Therefore, they should consider this situation in their instructional plan or program. 5. Yes, they should make an exception. It is because the family is willing to move to the state anyway and they will be forced to learn the language in order to adapt to the community. I think there is no need to force them, because naturally learning English would come naturally to them. 6. The advantages of oral and total communication are that it allows the child to be able to maximize his hearing and speech by learning.

The child is not limited to one particular skill for communicating such as the sign language, lip reading, etc. but he is immersed to the use of his hearing and communicating by speaking. The disadvantage of this program lies in its one-sidedness and dependence on only one option for auditory and oral training, and that is classroom instruction. Doctors insist that hearing and oral training may only be accomplished through classroom instruction, but is it not possible to instruct or inform the family in developing auditory and oral skills within the child.