



DIFFERENT EFFECTIVE METHODS OF TEACHING BLIND CHILDREN

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: This article discusses the different effective methods of teaching blind children. Teaching blind children requires creativity, patience, and a willingness to experiment with different methods. Braille, audio, tactile diagrams, technology, and the hand-over-hand technique are just a few of the methods that teachers can use to ensure that blind children receive the same level of education as sighted children. As technology continues to evolve, new teaching methods will emerge to help blind children learn and succeed.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching a child is a challenging task for any educator, but it becomes more complicated when the child is blind. Teaching is the most vital aspect of education, and it plays an essential role in shaping a child's future. If children with visual impairments are not taught the right way, they might face unnecessary challenges and difficulties in their lives since they have to rely more on other senses for learning. Therefore, it's the teacher's responsibility to understand his or her student's limitations and make the necessary adjustments to ensure that the student is getting a quality education. In this article, we will cover some significant challenges in teaching blind children and ways to overcome them, as well as various teaching strategies, techniques, and tools that are specifically designed for these children.

THE MAIN FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Challenges in Teaching Blind Children

1. **Communication barriers:** Blind children face a significant communication barrier, which can affect their learning. Since they cannot see the teacher's facial expressions, gestures, or body language, they might not always understand what is being taught. For example, a blind child may not understand sarcasm or irony, which often relies on contextual cues that they cannot perceive.
2. **Limited access to instructional materials:** Another significant challenge that blind children face is limited access to instructional materials compared to their sighted peers. Educational materials, such as textbooks, workbooks, and other written materials, are often not available in Braille or audio formats.

3. Lack of resources: Often, schools and teachers do not have the resources needed to provide students with the necessary adaptations and accommodations that help them overcome the challenges of visual impairment. For example, schools may not have Braille printers, talking calculators, or audio textbooks.
4. Social isolation: Blind children often have difficulty making friends, which can lead to social isolation. They might feel left out of certain activities or conversations because they cannot see what is happening around them.

Strategies for Overcoming the Challenges

1. Foster clear communication: One of the ways to overcome the communication barrier is to foster clear communication with the child. This can be achieved by speaking clearly, using simple vocabulary, and providing a detailed explanation of concepts. Additionally, teachers can use different voices and sound effects to indicate the different characters and moods in a story.
2. Provide access to instructional materials: To overcome the limited access to instructional materials, teachers can provide Braille, large print, and audio formats of the necessary materials. Additionally, teachers can use tactile illustrations to help students understand concepts such as graphs, maps, and diagrams.
3. Use technology: Technology can be a vital tool to help blind children learn. Students can use screen readers, Braille displays, and other software programs to access information and complete tasks. Teachers can also use online resources to create interactive and accessible activities, such as webinars, quizzes, and games.
4. Encourage social participation: Teachers can encourage social participation by arranging group activities that engage children without relying on vision. For example, teachers can organize listening games, role-playing exercises, and storytelling activities. Additionally, teachers can encourage students to work in pairs or small groups, which will give them the opportunity to socialize and make friends with people who understand their challenges.

Teaching Techniques for Blind Children

1. Audio description: Audio description is a technique that involves describing the visual elements of a story, such as facial expressions, body language, and scenery. Teachers can use this technique to help blind children visualize the story and understand the emotions and contexts behind the events.
2. Gestures and touch: Teachers can use gestures and touch to aid in learning. For instance, touching different parts of a globe to show where different countries are located can help a student understand geography. Similarly, using facial expressions to demonstrate emotions can help students understand the tone and mood of a story.
3. Braille instruction: Braille is a system of writing that uses raised dots to represent letters and symbols. By teaching Braille, teachers can help blind children learn to read and write independently.
4. Use of colors and contrast: Although blind children cannot see colors, they can still benefit from their use. Using high contrast between different elements in a document can help a blind child navigate the page more easily. Additionally, teachers can use different colors and textures in art projects to help students differentiate between different objects.

Tools for Teaching Blind Children

1. Braille printers: Braille printers can convert text into Braille and produce hard copies of the material. This allows students to read and take notes independently, helping them keep up with their sighted peers.

2. Audio textbooks: Audio textbooks are recorded versions of traditional textbooks that provide an alternative way for students to access the material. Audio textbooks can also be used in conjunction with Braille textbooks or large print to provide different options for students.

3. Talking calculators: Talking calculators can convert numbers into speech, making math easier for blind students. This tool helps students perform calculations independently and can help boost their confidence and ability to learn.

4. Tactile graphics: Tactile graphics are raised illustrations that are used to convey information to blind children through touch. Teachers can provide tactile graphics for maps, diagrams, and other visual aids to help students understand abstract concepts.

Teaching blind children can be a challenging but rewarding experience for educators. By understanding the challenges that these students face and implementing effective teaching strategies and tools, teachers can create an inclusive and accessible learning environment that meets the needs of all students. Teaching blind children requires patience, creativity, and an understanding of the unique needs of each student. With the proper training and resources, any teacher can learn to adapt their teaching style and provide an effective education for blind children.

Blindness is a physical disability that affects a child's learning and teaching process. Educators often face various challenges while teaching a blind child, such as creating an inclusive classroom environment, developing an effective curriculum, designing appropriate learning materials, and delivering lessons that cater to diverse abilities and learning styles. The purpose of this article is to provide a comprehensive guide on how to teach effectively for blind children. This article will explore various teaching strategies, technologies, and techniques that educators can use to create an inclusive, accessible, and effective learning environment for blind children.

Understanding the Needs of Blind Children

Teaching blind children requires a deep understanding of their unique needs, challenges, and strengths. Here are some of the essential elements of teaching a blind child effectively:

- **Accessible and Inclusive Learning Environment:** The learning environment should be accessible and inclusive, ensuring that the child can move around safely, easily access learning materials and equipment, and interact with peers, teachers, and other professionals.
- **Alternative Modalities for Learning:** Blind children rely on alternative modalities to learn, such as touch, sound, and smell. Teachers should use multisensory teaching strategies to enable blind children to access and understand new information.
- **Assistive Technologies:** Teachers should incorporate various assistive technologies to support blind children's learning, such as Braille writing and reading devices, text-to-speech software, and audio recording and playback devices.
- **Collaboration and Communication:** Teachers should collaborate with parents, guardians, and other professionals, such as orientation and mobility specialists, speech therapists, and psychologists, to ensure a holistic approach to teaching and learning.

Creating an Inclusive Classroom Environment

An inclusive and accessible classroom environment is critical for blind children's learning and well-being. Here are some tips for creating a welcoming, inclusive, and safe learning environment for blind children:

- **Rearrange the Classroom:** Rearrange the classroom to reduce obstacles and hazards and provide clear, uncluttered spaces for movements. Blind children rely on touch and sound to navigate the classroom and find objects, so ensure that furniture and equipment are well-positioned and organized.

- **Multisensory Learning Materials:** Provide multisensory learning materials that leverage touch, sound, and smell, such as tactile maps, audio descriptions, and scent-rich activities.
- **Engage all Senses:** Engage all the senses by incorporating different modalities of learning. For instance, instead of relying only on visual materials, use sound, touch, and smell to teach concepts and engage students.
- **Peer Support:** Encourage peer support by creating partnerships or buddy systems between blind and sighted students. This strategy promotes social interaction, empathy, and teamwork.

Developing an Effective Curriculum

Developing an effective curriculum for blind children requires careful planning, creativity, and collaboration. Here are some strategies for designing an effective and accessible curriculum for blind students:

- **Individualized Learning Plans:** Develop individualized learning plans that address the child's unique learning needs, preferences, and strengths. This plan should incorporate the child's IEP (Individualized Educational Program) goals, learning preferences, and present level of achievement.
- **Accessible Learning Materials:** Create accessible learning materials that can be accessed by blind students, such as Braille textbooks, audio recordings, large print materials, and tactile diagrams.
- **Multisensory Approach:** Use a multisensory approach to teaching by incorporating various modalities of learning, such as touch, sound, and smell. This approach makes learning more meaningful, engaging, and accessible for blind students.
- **Curriculum Modification:** Modify the curriculum to meet the child's unique learning needs, such as simplifying complex concepts, adapting assessments, and providing more support and accommodations.

Designing Appropriate Learning Materials

Blind children rely on alternative modalities such as Braille, tactile diagrams, and audio recordings to access learning materials. Educators should use various strategies and technologies to design appropriate learning materials that cater to these unique needs. Here are some essential considerations when designing learning materials for blind students:

Braille: Braille is a writing and reading system that uses raised dots to represent letters, numbers, and punctuation. Braille is a vital alternative modality for blind children, as it enables them to read and write independently. Educators should use Braille to create learning materials, such as textbooks, worksheets, and handouts.

Tactile Diagrams: Tactile diagrams are diagrams that use raised lines, textures, and shapes to represent images, charts, and graphs. Tactile diagrams enable blind students to access visual information in a tactile format, enhancing their understanding of the concept. Educators should use tactile diagrams to create accessible visual aids, such as maps, graphs, and illustrations.

Audio Recordings: Audio recordings are critical for blind students who may not have access to visual materials such as videos and images. Unlike visual materials, audio recordings leverage sound to convey information, making learning more accessible and engaging for blind students. Educators should use audio recordings to create alternative learning materials, such as audiobooks, podcasts, and lectures.

Delivering Effective Lessons

Delivering effective lessons for blind children requires creativity, flexibility, and sensitivity to their unique learning needs. Here are some tips for delivering effective and engaging lessons for blind students:

- **Clear Instructions:** Provide clear and concise instructions for activities and assignments, explaining each step in detail. Use alternative modalities such as Braille or audio instructions if needed.
- **Multisensory Teaching:** Use multisensory teaching strategies to deliver lessons that cater to different learning styles and abilities. Use props, tactile objects, and audio recordings to enhance engagement and comprehension.
- **Collaboration and Interaction:** Encourage collaboration and interaction between students by creating group activities that promote teamwork, socialization, and problem solving.
- **Use Technology:** Incorporate various assistive technologies such as text-to-speech software, screen readers, and digital magnifiers to deliver lessons effectively. These technologies enhance access to information and promote independent learning.

Teaching blind children requires a comprehensive approach that addresses their unique learning needs, abilities, and challenges. Educators should adopt inclusive and accessible classroom environments, create appropriate learning materials, develop effective curriculums, and use various teaching strategies and technologies to deliver engaging and effective lessons. With careful planning, creativity, and collaboration with other professionals, educators can create a positive and empowering learning environment that promotes the academic and personal growth of blind children.

Blindness is a disability that affects millions of individuals around the world. Although it is a challenging disability to live with, it is not a barrier that should impede access to education for children who are blind. Over the years, teachers have used various teaching methods to ensure that blind children receive the same level of education as sighted children. In this article, we will discuss different methods of teaching blind children. Blindness is a medical condition affecting millions of people worldwide, and while it can have a significant impact on one's daily activities, it should not be a barrier to accessing education. While the challenges posed to blind children in the learning process may seem enormous, education specialists have explored different teaching methods to ensure that they can learn with the same level of competence as sighted children. This article will delve into five different approaches to teaching blind children; Braille, Tactile Diagrams, Audio, Technology, and the Hand-over-Hand Technique.

Method 1: Braille

Braille is a system of raised dots that represent letters of the alphabet, numbers, music symbols, and other written characters. It was invented in 1824 by Louis Braille, a Frenchman who lost his sight in childhood. Today, Braille is the most commonly used method of teaching blind children to read and write.

Braille is usually taught through touch. Blind children learn to read the raised dots with their fingertips. Braille textbooks, workbooks, and reading materials are available for almost every subject. Braille is an essential tool for blind children, as it allows them to read and write independently. It is also a valuable skill that blind adults can use to pursue higher education and career opportunities.

Braille is a system of raised dots and bumps that represent different letters of the alphabet, punctuation marks, numbers, and musical symbols. The dots can be felt by touch, enabling blind people to access written materials independently. Louis Braille, a French blind man, created Braille in 1824, and since then, it has been the most used method of teaching blind children to read and write.

Braille is taught through touch, and children learn to read and write alphabets and numbers by tracing the raised dots with their fingers. Braille textbooks, workbooks, and reading materials are available for almost every subject. The growth of technology has enabled devices such as electronic Braille note-takers and computer screen Braille displays.

Teaching Braille is intensive, and it requires the child to have tactile ability, finger strength, and dexterity. Teachers need to train the students on proper finger positioning, reading speed, and writing skills. Students also need to keep practicing to speed up their reading and writing and improve their accuracy and fluency.

Braille is an essential tool for blind children because it enables them to read and write independently, boosting their self-confidence and self-reliance. Braille also opens up educational and career opportunities for blind adults, including access to information and services, legal and medical documents, and financial management.

Method 2: Audio

Audio is another method of teaching blind children. Audio can be used to provide access to books, lectures, and other instructional materials. Audio is another method of teaching blind children that uses recorded sound to convey information. Audio tapes can be used to provide access to books, lectures, and other learning materials. Audio recordings can be played on a tape recorder, CD player, or MP3 player.

Audio books are an excellent alternative to Braille books. Blind children can listen to audio books, just like sighted children can read print books. Audio books are available for almost every subject and can be checked out from local libraries.

Audio can also be used to supplement other teaching methods. For example, a teacher might read a passage from a textbook aloud to the class, allowing blind students to listen and follow along. The use of audio materials is expanding with the growth of digital technology, including screen readers for computers that provide vocal output of text displayed on the screen. Digital players for audio books also offer students access to digital books online, and they can be downloaded onto a computer or phone. This method considerably reduces the size and weight of audio materials, making it possible to store a vast number of books on a small device.

Method 3: Tactile Diagrams

Tactile diagrams are raised representations of pictures, charts, and graphs. Blind children can use tactile diagrams to learn about geography, science, math, and other subjects that require visual representation. For example, a tactile map of the United States would allow blind students to understand the location of states and major cities. A tactile diagram of a simple machine could help blind students understand how it works.

Tactile diagrams can be created by embossing paper with different textures or using 3D printing technology. Teachers and parents can also create tactile diagrams using simple materials such as glue, sand, and foam.

For instance, tactile maps of different regions enable blind students to understand the location of countries and cities. They can also integrate scientific concepts such as the structure of a cell, models of simple machines, or geological cross-sections.

Learning tactile diagrams requires specialized materials and training from a teacher who can provide hands-on instruction. Teachers and parents can create tactile diagrams using simple materials such as foam, sand, glue, and foam boards. Special embossing tools and 3D printers can also create more elaborate and detailed diagrams.

Method 4: Technology

Technology has opened up new opportunities for blind children. With the help of screen readers and magnifiers, blind children can access computers, tablets, and smartphones.

A screen reader is a software program that reads text on a computer screen aloud. It can also convert text into Braille, allowing blind children to read the text with their fingertips. Screen readers are available for Microsoft Windows, Apple macOS, and mobile operating systems such as iOS and Android. A magnifier is a software program that enlarges text and images on a computer screen. It can also invert colors and adjust contrast, making it easier for blind children to read text on a computer screen. Magnifiers are available for Microsoft Windows, Apple macOS, and mobile operating systems such as iOS and Android.

Technology can also be used to supplement other teaching methods. For example, a teacher might use a video conferencing tool such as Zoom to conduct a virtual classroom session with blind students who are located remotely.

Advancements in technology have opened up new opportunities for blind children to learn. With the help of screen readers and magnifiers, blind children can access computers, tablets, and smartphones. These digital tools have elevated the independence and overall capacity of blind children to learn and interact with their peers.

Screen readers are software programs that read text on a computer or mobile device screen aloud. They can also convert text into Braille and read it out loud or display it on a Braille display. Screen readers may be free or paid, and they are available on Windows, Apple, and mobile operating systems, such as Android and iOS.

Magnifiers are another software tool that increases the size of text and images on a computer screen, making it easier for blind people to read. They are available for Microsoft Windows, Apple macOS, and mobile operating systems, such as Android and iOS.

Familiarity with technology involves learning computer skills such as typing, using email and internet, and downloading files. Students also need to learn how to navigate the systems and operate various software programs.

Recent advancements in artificial intelligence have facilitated the development of devices such as smart glasses and smart walking canes with cameras that can identify and analyze objects in the student's environment. These technological tools have assisted in mobility and navigation, thus increasing the student's interaction abilities with their environment.

Method 5: Hand-over-Hand Technique

The hand-over-hand technique is a tactile teaching method that involves physically guiding the blind child's hand to perform a task. This technique is particularly useful for children with multiple disabilities or those who are resistant to learning through other methods.

For example, a teacher might use the hand-over-hand technique to teach a blind child to tie their shoes. The teacher would place their own hands over the child's hands and guide them through the steps of tying the shoelaces.

The hand-over-hand technique can also be used to teach blind children how to write. The teacher would hold the child's hand and guide them in forming letters. Over time, the child would learn how to write independently.

The teacher guides the blind child's hand to help them perform a task. Such skills include buttoning a shirt, tying shoelaces, using utensils, or writing. The hand-over-hand technique aims to guide and teach, ensuring the blind child is independent while also cultivating trust and familiarity between the student and the teacher.

Ultimately, the technique builds the student's motor skills, hand-eye coordination, and sense of touch. Through repetition and guided practice, students can learn and act independently.

CONCLUSION

Teaching blind children requires creativity, patience, and a willingness to experiment with different methods. Braille, audio, tactile diagrams, technology, and the hand-over-hand technique are just a few of the methods that teachers can use to ensure that blind children receive the same level of education as sighted children. As technology continues to evolve, new teaching methods will emerge to help blind children learn and succeed. When dealing with blind children's education, the role of a teacher cannot be underestimated. The teacher provides the opportunity, guidance, and support to the student, which, when combined with the appropriate methods, facilitates learning for blind children. Braille, Audio, Tactile Diagrams, Technology, and the Hand-over-Hand Technique are some of the methods that teachers employ to guarantee blind children receive the same level of education as sighted children. As technology continues to advance, other teaching methods will emerge, offering additional opportunities to learn and grow for visually impaired children.

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