

## **Best Teaching Practices**

### **7 Effective Teaching Strategies For The Classroom**

The classroom is a dynamic environment, bringing together students from different backgrounds with various abilities and personalities. Being an effective teacher therefore requires the implementation of creative and innovative teaching strategies in order to meet students' individual needs.

Whether you've been teaching two months or twenty years, it can be difficult to know which teaching strategies will work best with your students. As a teacher there is no 'one size fits all' solution, so here is a range of effective teaching strategies you can use to inspire your classroom practice.

#### **1. Visualization**

Bring dull academic concepts to life with visual and practical learning experiences, helping your students to understand how their schooling applies in the real-world.

Examples include using the interactive whiteboard to display photos, audio clips and videos, as well as encouraging your students to get out of their seats with classroom experiments and local field trips.

#### **2. Cooperative learning**

Encourage students of mixed abilities to work together by promoting small group or whole class activities.

Through verbally expressing their ideas and responding to others your students will develop their self-confidence, as well as enhance their communication and critical thinking skills which are vital throughout life.

Solving mathematical puzzles, conducting scientific experiments and acting out short drama sketches are just a few examples of how cooperative learning can be incorporated into classroom lessons.

### **3. Inquiry-based instruction**

Pose thought-provoking questions which inspire your students to think for themselves and become more independent learners.

Encouraging students to ask questions and investigate their own ideas helps improve their problem-solving skills as well as gain a deeper understanding of academic concepts. Both of which are important life skills.

Inquiries can be science or math-based such as ‘why does my shadow change size?’ or ‘is the sum of two odd numbers always an even number?’. However, they can also be subjective and encourage students to express their unique views, e.g. ‘do poems have to rhyme?’ or ‘should all students wear uniform?’.

### **4. Differentiation**

Differentiate your teaching by allocating tasks based on students’ abilities, to ensure no one gets left behind.

Assigning classroom activities according to students’ unique learning needs means individuals with higher academic capabilities are stretched and those who are struggling get the appropriate support.

This can involve handing out worksheets that vary in complexity to different groups of students, or setting up a range of work stations around the classroom which contain an assortment of tasks for students to choose from.

Moreover, using an educational tool such as Quizalize can save you hours of time because it automatically groups your students for you, so you can easily identify individual and whole class learning gaps ([click here to find out more](#)).

### **5. Technology in the classroom**

Incorporating technology into your teaching is a great way to actively engage your students, especially as digital media surrounds young people in the 21st century.

Interactive whiteboards or mobile devices can be used to display images and videos, which helps students visualize new academic concepts. Learning can become more interactive when technology is used as students can physically engage during lessons as well as instantly research their ideas, which develops autonomy.

Mobile devices, such as iPads and/or tablets, can be used in the classroom for students to record results, take photos/videos or simply as a behaviour management technique. Plus, incorporating educational programmes such as Quizalize into your lesson plans is also a great way to make formative assessments fun and engaging.

## **6. Behavior management**

Implementing an effective behavior management strategy is crucial to gain your students respect and ensure students have an equal chance of reaching their full potential.

Noisy, disruptive classrooms do not encourage a productive learning environment, therefore developing an atmosphere of mutual respect through a combination of discipline and reward can be beneficial for both you and your students.

Examples include fun and interactive reward charts for younger students, where individuals move up or down based on behavior with the top student receiving a prize at the end of the week. 'Golden time' can also work for students of all ages, with a choice of various activities such as games or no homework in reward for their hard work.

## **7. Professional development**

Engaging in regular professional development programmes is a great way to enhance teaching and learning in your classroom.

With educational policies constantly changing it is extremely useful to attend events where you can gain inspiration from other teachers and academics. It's also a great excuse to get out of the classroom and work alongside other teachers just like you!

Sessions can include learning about new educational technologies, online safety training, advice on how to use your teaching assistant(s) and much more.

Being an effective teacher is a challenge because every student is unique, however, by using a combination of teaching strategies you can address students' varying learning styles and

academic capabilities as well as make your classroom a dynamic and motivational environment for students.

**Importance of guidance & counseling for the school/college going students By Himanee Chaudhary**

Guidance and counseling is the process which helps the students to know their skills, interests, personality that will help students in further career selection. Initially, I will explain about guidance and counseling. Guidance is the process in which person able to know their ability, interest, a capacity that will help in the encounter of problems faced by them. Guidance is the process of a dynamic interpersonal relationship that is prepared to influence the person's attitude and follow-up behavior. According to McDonald, The objective of Guidance is to assist students and teachers in making available desirable qualifications and skills rather than achieving the goals of educational programs. Counseling is the sharing of thoughts, reciprocal logic and guidance between groups or two. According to J. E. Smith, Counseling is the process in counselor has a broad discussion related to counselee's interest, planning, and adjustment. So now the question is how guidance and counseling are related to school/college going students. Students are very much focused on academic performances but they never assess themselves because they haven't explored in Schools/colleges. They choose/plan their career not assessing self but with the influence of others expertise. It is quite obvious that if I am an Engineer, definitely I will suggest for engineering because I have expertise in this field only. Same is applicable for Doctor, Lawyer, designer etc. Here, students made mistakes during the selection of streams and career. Due to this reason, self-assessment is very important. The earlier trend was not quite often because there were the limited scope and limited options but in recent days, scope and career options are quite broad that cannot be explored easily, then the trend of self-assessment came into existence and treated as very important. By self-assessment, students can be able to know about their Interest area, abilities, personalities, analytical level, and suited work styles. These factors play a significant role in stream and career selection. Modern time, most of the students depressed related to a career decision. The simple and straight reason is lack of knowledge of current trends and developments, available streams, unable to know themselves. I have

observed personally, students good in academics may be a topper in his/her respective classes but when the matter comes to a career decision, they are often failed to take the right decision. Hence, guidance and counseling come into the existence and trend is increasing day by day. The counselors/experts have wide knowledge about current trends and developments, available streams and factors that have a major influence on career decision-making/planning. Counselors will be able to provide guidance and counseling to the students for encounters all problems related to career and update them related to current trends and developments, available streams. By guidance and counseling, students will be able to know about themselves and easily encounter the problems that they face in day to day life. This is most important for their bright and successful career. The identification of Interest, abilities, personality will help students to recognize their strengths and that is their strong zone, easier to sharpen. It is psychologically proven, the area, in which individuals are strong, find interest to explore that area and easy to build their career in the same field. So, in the current trend, guidance and counseling are very much required for school/college going students to identify their strength, weakness and at the same time work on their strength and area of interest to do wonders in future.

**Cours d'Anglais, Pr. SADOUNI Messaouda**

**LMD, 2eme et 3eme année Counseling et Education Spéciale**

**Counseling for Parents of Children with Special Needs**

Problems Encountered by Parents of Children with Disabilities

Powerlessness.

Do you feel like you have no power to affect the outcome of events around you?

Imbalance in Caretaking.

Does one parent feel like they are doing all the work?

Emotional Imbalance.

Does it seem like one parent lacks emotional involvement?

Relationship Problems.

Have problems in your relationship gotten worse?

Stress.

Do you never seem to have time to take care of yourself or your relationship with your significant other?

Anger/Depression.

Does one or both parents express extreme anger or else seem depressed?

Sibling Issues.

Do siblings act out in ways to gain attention? Are siblings confused as to how to feel or behave?

**Counseling Can Help**

Parents of children with disabilities need help coping, strengthening their relationship, and learning how to take better care of themselves. Counseling can help you—

**Learn That You Have Power.** There are some things you cannot control, but there are many things you can. It helps to be reminded of the things you do have the ability to affect.

**Balance Caretaking.** You must learn to respect each other's style of caretaking and to communicate and negotiate caretaking roles, so that instead of simply reacting to situations, you can proactively address challenging problems.

**Respect Emotional Difference.** Different people process emotions differently. One person may grieve openly. Another may feel so overwhelmed that they find some activity to distract themselves. These differences are part of being human and each is valid for that person.

**Process Feelings.** In order to be there for your children, your relationship and yourself, you must move through the stages of grief in your own way. You must grieve the loss of the life you thought you were going to have.

**Take Care of Yourself.** To be there fully for your child with special needs, your typical children, and your significant other, you must learn to take care of yourself, both emotionally and physically.

**Build a Healthy Relationship.** You must also learn to take care of your relationship. If you thrive and your relationship thrives, your child with special needs will thrive to the best of his or her potential, and the whole family will thrive.

### **Benefits of Counseling**

Counseling has the potential to improve your life, relationship and family in these ways—

Relationship grows stronger

Function better both emotionally and physically

Better care for your child with special needs

Better family life for your typical children

## **Cours d'Anglais, Pr. SADOUNI Messaouda**

### **LMD, 2eme et 3eme année Counseling et Education Spéciale**

#### **Counseling for Parents of Children with Special Needs**

#### **Does a Medical Diagnosis Qualify a Child for Special Education?**

When a child receives a medical diagnosis from a doctor outside of school, is the child automatically qualified for special education services via an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”)? The answer is no. To qualify for special education services, a child who has been diagnosed with a medical disability must also be found eligible as a “child with a disability,” as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”). To put it simply, medical disabilities do not always qualify as educational disabilities under the law. Whether a child has a qualifying educational disability under the IDEA is a decision determined by a team of professionals at the child’s school, including the child’s parents, and only after the school has comprehensively evaluated the child to determine whether the child’s disabilities give rise to educational needs.

In general, IDEA requires that special education services be provided to a child with disabilities only if the disabilities are adversely impacting the child’s educational progress. If the child’s disabilities do not impact the child’s educational progress, then the child does not qualify for an IEP. However, when examining whether a child’s disabilities are impacting the child’s educational progress, it is important for parents and schools to consider not only the impact on the child’s grades, state standardized test scores, and academic progress, but also whether the child’s disabilities are impacting the child’s social skills development, emotional/behavioral progress, adaptive skills, activities of daily living, and executive functioning skills such as planning and organizing in the classroom setting.

Additionally, in order to qualify for an IEP, the law requires that a child must meet at least one of thirteen educational disability classifications under IDEA. These include: 1) Autism; 2) Developmental Delay; 3) Deaf Blind; 4) Emotional Disturbance; 5) Hearing Impairment; 6) Specific Learning Disability; 7) Intellectual Disability; 8) Orthopedic Impairment; 9) Other Health Impairment; 10) Speech and/or Language Impairment; 11) Traumatic Brain Injury; 12) Visual Impairment including Blindness; and 13) Preschool Speech Delay.

In Delaware, the definition of each disability category is contained in Title 14, Section 925.6.0 of the Delaware Code. Though they are quite detailed, parents may want to familiarize themselves with the criteria in order to understand whether or not their child may qualify for special education.

In Delaware (but not in all states), a few of the educational disability classifications (Other Health Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury, Orthopedic Impairment, Hearing Impairment, Deaf Blind, and Visual Impairment including Blindness) do require documentation from a qualified doctor that the child has a particular medical condition. In those cases, the diagnosis is considered one aspect of the criteria that must be met for the classification. Additionally, a child might meet several of the educational disability classifications, but he or she only needs to meet one in order to receive services. It is important to recognize that once a child is found eligible for special education under one of the thirteen educational disability classifications, that classification does not determine what special education services the child can receive. Rather, the special education services are based on the child's individual needs.

What should you do if your child has received a medical diagnosis and you feel that he or she may need special education services? First, share the medical diagnosis with your child's school. While a medical diagnosis does not automatically qualify a child for special education and an IEP, as a general rule, it is important to communicate with your school regarding any medical diagnoses that your child has received. Such communication will allow the school to consider the diagnoses when evaluating your child and determining how to best meet your child's educational needs. Second, if an evaluation has not been initiated by the school, you should request (in writing) that the school conduct an evaluation of your child to determine the child's eligibility for special education services. Once the school's evaluation is complete, the school will convene a meeting to determine whether your child qualifies for special education.

Even if your child does not qualify for special education and an IEP under IDEA, the school should also consider whether he or she qualifies for accommodations under another law, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ("Section 504"). As with IDEA, a medical diagnosis does not automatically qualify a child for accommodations under Section 504. However, the definition of a qualifying "disability" under Section 504 is broader than IDEA's definition. There are no specific educational disability classifications under Section 504. Rather, to qualify for accommodations under Section 504, a student must have "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities." As with IDEA, whether your child meets the qualifying definition under Section 504 is a decision for the school and parents to reach together, and must be based on a comprehensive evaluation.

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**The traditional counseling process includes the following six important, yet separate components.**

**Opening:** The opening process is perhaps, one of the most important parts of the interaction with your client. It is your chance to get to know your client and for them to get to know you. It is also where you will set the tone for the rest of the therapeutic relationship.

**Exploring Client Understanding:** The exploration process is where you will begin to understand your client. You will explore their past and evaluate their current concerns. Here, you will together establish goals and set expectations.

**Understanding:** Important in developing a strong relationship with your client, you can demonstrate understanding by using verbal and nonverbal cues, as well as reflections and paraphrases.

**Intervention:** The intervention process is about choosing the appropriate counseling techniques that will encourage growth within your client.

**Exploring Problems:** Exploration is the process of learning more about your client and why they have come to counseling. Exploration is necessary in truly understanding a client's thoughts and feelings in relation to their pressing problem.

**Empower to Create Own Solutions:** Empowering your client is not about providing them with all the answers. It is about empowering them, with your counseling skills, to find their own solutions.

### **Counseling Skills**

As a student, your **master's degree in counseling** is about developing and expanding upon the counseling skills that will best help your clients. These are some of the most important counseling techniques you are likely to use in your counseling sessions.

**Listening/Observing:** Listening is one of the most valuable counseling skills in the therapeutic relationship. It can be used in three ways:

- **Attending:** Attending is the ability to be physically present for the client. It means giving them your undivided attention and making appropriate eye contact, mirroring

body language, and nodding. These attending behaviors show your client that you care. In fact, **according to Kevin J. Drab, approximately 80% of communication takes place non-verbally External link**.

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- **Active listening:** Active listening occurs when you are listening with all of your senses. According to the **Perinatal Mental Health Project External link**, active listening involves listening with your body, heart, ears, eyes, and mouth.
- **Verbal listening:** This is a form of showing you are listening through the words that you use. These verbal cues are used to show attention and to encourage more exploration from the client. This can be as simple as ‘yes’, or ‘go on’. It can also be in the form of paraphrasing or repeating a word of emotion that the client has just said.

**Asking Questions:** Questions are helpful in the therapeutic environment because they allow you to learn more about your client. The type of questions that you ask will set the tone of the session and the entire counseling process. Questions occur in two forms.

- **Closed:** A closed question is the practice of asking a question that can be answered as a ‘yes’ or ‘no’. Closed questions should generally be avoided in the counseling relationship, as they do not encourage deeper exploration.
- **Open:** An open question is necessary to gather information. An open question is one that cannot be answered with a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’ and it requires reflection or exploration on the client’s end. Every open question should be intentional and therapeutic. According to Susan Mills of the **Nielsen Norman Group External link**, the best open ended questions begin with ‘how’ and ‘what’.

**Reflection: Reflections are used in the counseling process to accurately describe the client’s state External link from their verbal or nonverbal cues.**

- **Feelings reflections:** Reflections allow clients to hear the feelings they have just expressed. Sometimes you have to look for the descriptive feeling in a client’s statement. It can also be helpful to look at a client’s nonverbal feeling cues.
- **Restating/Rephrasing:** Restating and rephrasing can build a stronger client therapist relationship. Rephrasing a client’s statement allows you to better understand what a client has just said and to gain further clarity, if you have gotten it wrong.
- **Affirmation:** Affirmation is a form of encouragement that is used to affirm behaviors or life choices. **Affirmation is important for empowering clients External link**. A few common affirmations include affirming progress that a client has made toward a goal or encouraging a client to do what is important to them.

**Empathy:** Empathy is the ability to put yourself in someone else’s shoes. It is much more than sympathy in that you are able to show your understanding of your clients feeling surrounding an experience.

**Genuineness:** Begin genuine is creating congruence between yourself and your words. Every therapist is different and will provide a different therapeutic process. It is important to remain genuine in all counseling techniques and verbal and nonverbal cues.

**Unconditional Positive Regard:** Demonstrating **unconditional positive regard External link** is the idea of accepting your client for who they are. It is a means of expressing warmth and respect.

**Counselor Self-Disclosure:** This is a tricky counseling skill to maneuver. A general rule to follow is to only share personal information that is beneficial to the therapeutic process. It might also be used to help the counselor relate better with their client.

## Counseling Theories

Counseling theories are used as a guideline for understanding human nature and to determine which counseling skills you will use in your counseling sessions.

- **Psychoanalytic Theory:** This theory was originally developed by Sigmund Freud. It supports the idea that unconscious forces drive human actions. A psychoanalytic therapy session includes skills such as dream analysis, free association, resistance analysis, and transference analysis. Much of the personality is thought to have developed in childhood and similarities are identified and explored in the therapeutic relationship.
- **Person-Centered Therapy:** This theory is a form of psychotherapy originally developed by Carl Rogers. Sometimes also known as Rogerian therapy, it operates on the assumption that every human being has the ability to fulfil their full potential. A client-centered approach in the therapeutic relationship involves self-actualization, empathy, and unconditional positive regard. When practicing person-centered therapy, the client therapist relationship is very important because the positive interactions are a form of therapy themselves. The relationship should be supportive and **the therapist acts more as a guide External link**, as the client is the expert of their own life.
- **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT):** **CBT is a shorter term approach External link** to the therapeutic process. This hands-on approach lends its practice to the theory that human problems stem from faulty patterns of thinking. The counseling process primarily involves the challenge of automatic thinking and often negative thought patterns. It encourages the client to find logic in their way of thinking. The **counselor plays an important role in challenging these thoughts External link**.
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- **The Family Systems Model:** Family Systems view all human troubles and conflicts as a familial unit. The theory, originally developed by Murray Bowen, is focused on **the idea that family is the primary source of emotions External link** and personality. A family system can be present in many forms, including structural, strategic, and intergenerational. Common techniques used in the therapeutic process include the creation of a genogram, family projection activities, emotional triangles, and the

differentiation of self. This counseling theory is often used in marriage and family counseling sessions.

Counseling is about creating strong relationships with your clients that will empower them to obtain mental health and to fulfill their goals. Through the use of intentional counseling techniques and an understanding of human nature developed through counseling theories, you can guide your client in reaching optimal mental health.

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#### **Counseling for Parents of Children with Special Needs**

##### **What is special education**

Special education is a broad term used to by the law (IDEA) to describe specially designed instruction that meets the unique needs of a child who has a disability. These services are provided by the public school system and are free of charge. Services can include instruction in the classroom, at home, in hospitals and institutions. Learning disabilities cover a wide spectrum of disorders ranging from mild to severe. They can include mental, physical, behavioral and emotional disabilities.

There are 13 categories of special education as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In order to qualify for special education, the IEP team must determine that a child has one of the following:

- Autism
- Blindness
- Deafness
- Emotional Disturbance
- Hearing Impairment
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impaired
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment

In order for the IEP team to QUALIFY a child for services, the student must be found to have one of the 13 categories of special education and it must adversely affect their educational performance.

## WHAT IS THE GOAL of SPECIAL EDUCATION?

Special education makes it possible for your child to achieve academic success in the least restrictive environment despite their disability. The federal law governing the system is called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA. IDEA entitles all children with learning disabilities to a free appropriate education (FAPE). Examples of "appropriate" programs include:

A specific program or class for your child.

Access to specialists.

Modifications in the educational program such as curriculum and teaching methods.

There are hundreds of unfamiliar terms and acronyms in the IEP process.

## HOW DO I GET STARTED?

If your child is struggling in school, having social or behavioral problems, or if you suspect they have one of the 13 categories of special education, you can request an evaluation. Some school districts request that you meet with your school's student study team (SST) before conducting an evaluation. If your child does not qualify for services under IDEA, they may qualify for modifications under Section 504 of the American Disabilities Act of 1973.

If your child attends a private school you should read my special section on this in order to understand your rights if your child has a learning disability but attends a non-public school.

You may also be interested in purchasing the easy to read IEP Guide which provides you with all the information located on this web site along with sample request letters, a sample SST and 504 plan and IEP Tips in a workbook format. You can view the Table of Contents to see if it might be valuable to your situation.