

FACT SHEET

Tadoma

Students with dual sensory impairments 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 children who are deafblind. Tadoma also can be used to provide 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 that look alike on the lips (e.g., "F" and "V") will feel different 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 she seems tired or uninterested. This method should be enjoyable for both the student and the adult.

Resources

- Robbins, N. (1963). Educational beginnings with deaf-blind children. (Perkins Publication #21). (Available from Perkins School for the Blind, Watertown, MA 02172).
- Robbins, N. (1963). Speech beginnings for the deaf-blind child. (Perkins Publication #22). (Available from Perkins School for the Blind, Watertown, MA 02172).

**The Project for New Mexico
Children & Youth Who Are
Deafblind**



The Center for Development & Disability
2300 Menaul NE
Albuquerque, NM 87107
(505) 272-0321
toll free (877) 614-4051

Fact sheets from the Project for NM Children & Youth Who Are Deafblind are to be used by both families and professionals serving individuals with dual sensory impairments. The information applies to students 0 – 21 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. The fact sheet is a starting point for further information. Information for this Fact Sheet kindly supplied by California Deaf-Blind Services and the Nevada Dual Sensory Impairment Project.