Strategies for Learning and Teaching

- Students with Down syndrome have strong visual learning modalities. Teaching reading to students with Down syndrome should be characterised by a strong emphasis on visual learning. Visual demonstrations, pictures and illustrations can also be successfully used to assist in providing effective instruction in other subject areas of the curriculum.

- The teaching of phonics and phonological awareness should not be neglected. (Bentley et al., 2016)

- The use of manipulatives and activity learning can be beneficially employed in the development of number concepts. Numicon© visually-based mathematic materials have been developed with particular reference to the learning strengths and needs of the student with Down syndrome. (Bentley et al., 2016)

- It is important that high expectations and predictability characterise all learning and teaching opportunities.

- Students with Down syndrome generally demonstrate good social skills, which can be constructively utilised to increase learning and teaching opportunities.

- Tactile demonstrations and activities also appeal to many students with Down syndrome.

- Directly teach timetables, routines and school rules to students.

- Speak directly to the student, using clear language and short sentences, and use appropriate and unambiguous facial expressions.

- Allow adequate time for the student to process language and respond.

- Structure learning and teaching opportunities to enable the student to engage in tasks with other students, who can act as appropriate role models.

- Be aware that the student may become unnecessarily dependent through the availability of excessive one-to-one support.

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