

## Role of Teachers on Helping Slow Learners to Bring Out Their Hidden Skills



### Education

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### ABSTRACT

*Teaching is a challenging profession that requires a lot of patience, innovation and motivation from the teachers in order to bring about an all round development among their students. Inside the classroom there will be a mixed section of learners based on their level of intelligence and performance criteria. Slow learning is not a learning disability that can be classified as a diagnostic category. It is simply a term used to describe a student with the ability to acquire all necessary academic skills, but at a rate and depth below that of the average student. Hence the challenge for the teachers is to understand the student's areas of interests and develop a teaching plan to cover syllabus in a given time frame. This paper is mainly focused on the responsibilities of the teacher on bringing out the slow learners and also it briefly explains on remedial teaching for slow learners to overcome their problems.*

### Introduction

If I cannot learn the way you teach, will you teach me the way I can learn?" (L. D. Child).

Teaching is a challenging profession that requires a lot of patience, innovation and motivation from the teachers in order to bring about an all round development among their students. Inside the classroom there will be a mixed section of learners based on their level of intelligence and performance criteria. It is among these learners, there will be some who cannot cope up with the lessons taught inside the classroom as their peers do and hence these learners are tagged as the slow learners. Hence here comes the greatest challenge for a good teacher to guide and help the slow learners improve in fetching good grades and come out with flying colors. A good student can always get good grades on his own merits which require very little effort on the teacher's part. But to help a slow learner fetch a good and suitable grade is a challenge that marks the qualities of a good teacher. Since, being a teacher faces such problems inside the classroom and some ways should be adopted in order to help a slow learner achieve good grades and graduate successfully.

### Slow Learner

Slow learning is not a learning disability that can be classified as a diagnostic category. It is simply a term used to describe a student with the ability to acquire all necessary academic skills, but at a rate and depth below that of the average student. In order to grasp new concepts, a slow learner needs more time, more repetition, and often, more resources from teachers to be successful. Reasoning skills are typically delayed, which makes new concepts difficult to grasp.

In today's world, unfortunately, 'learning' has become a one-size-fits-all process that is not tailored to suit a person's abilities. This conformation of learning is especially true of our conventional school systems. The problem, however, is that not all children can adapt to such a rigid style of learning. Some children just cannot cope with the fast-paced and rigid approach that is characteristic of conventional teaching. Due to this, a gap forms between their true ability and their performance level and such children are then dubbed 'Slow Learners'.

### Responsibilities of the Teacher on Slow Learners

Slow-learners are not averse to learning, and have no limitations for learning, but in fact have their own psychology for learning. Hence the challenge for the parents or guardians or teachers is to understand the student's areas of interests and develop a teaching plan to cover syllabus in a given time frame. Slow learners are very sensitive and self conscious as they are very well aware of their weakness in comparison with the fast learners. The following are the responsibilities of the teacher on bringing out them:

### Building Up Confidence Among Slow Learners

The first responsibility of the teacher is to build up confidence

among these learners and make them believe that they are no less than others. Encouraging words and phrases may bring about a positive impact on the slow learners and will boost them to perform better.

### Finding Out The Main Reason Behind The Learner's Weak Performance

Teachers are first required to find out the main reason behind the learner's weak performance and also to study those areas minutely where she needs to work upon in order to guide the slow learner to perform well.

### Interact With The Slow Learners More Often

She needs to interact with the slow learners more often so that she can keep a record of every movement of the learner and adopt ways in which the slow learner can be guided.

### Giving Extra Care And Practice

Extra care and practice should be given to the slow learners as compared to their peers. If need be the teacher can take extra classes or may allow the learner to come to her place so that she may work out the areas of concern along with these learners. The teacher may utilize some of her time to do a good deal of research in order to find out simple ways of helping these slow learners to study in an easy and simple way. She might set mock tests for the learners or give them simple home assignments which are interesting and related to the lessons completed inside the classroom.

### Pay Equal Attention In The Class Room

Inside the classroom she must never make the slow learner feel neglected or unwanted as it might create a feeling of inferiority among these learners which might lay an effect on their grades. She must pay equal attention to these learners and may make them sit in the first row if possible.

### Arrangement For Special Learning Resources

Special programs with the help of the audio-visual aids, graphics, displays, reference books, online material and worksheets must be created for these slow learners to enhance their learning.

### Maintenance of Cumulative Records

Cumulative records must be maintained by the teachers in order to keep a track of the learner's progress. This cumulative record is mandatory for the teacher to maintain as she will know how the slow learner is responding to her ways of teaching. If she finds any area where the learner has not made much improvement then she can change her ways of teaching and try out another way that might be proved comfortable for the learner.

### Maintaining Friendly Relationship

A teacher needs to be a friend to these learners on whom they can fall back upon. These learners cannot express themselves fully to their peers or to their parents and hence needs some-

body whom they can rely upon. Hence it is up to the teacher to fill up that vacuum and enhance these slow learners' all round development.

### Repetition

Saying the same thing over and over, but it helps make a concept more concrete. A slow learner with limited reasoning skills will take longer to comprehend what may seem easy and almost natural to us.

### Encouraging Other Activities

Encourage on other activities helping the child to experience success. Put up posters in his work space so whenever his concentration drifts, he is constantly reminded of the task at hand. Repeat these from time to time so as to keep up a healthy level of confidence.

### Apply the theory of Multiple Intelligence

By allowing the child to dabble in a range of activities at a young age helps in success not only boosts confidence but excelling in a certain area, whatever it maybe, allows the child to feel socially accepted and 'normal'. Additionally, sports can then also be used to teach various mathematical computations and calculations, for instance.

### Arranging For Peer Tutoring

Peer tutoring is one of the most effective strategies for slow learners. Parents and teachers should identify tolerant and caring peers and allow the slow learner to be taught alongside them or through them. The more a child interacts with those of his age, the more successful he will feel, eliminating the problem of self-confidence.

### Adding Variety to the Academic Routine

Add variety to the academic routine by making learning a fun process through the use of educational puzzles and games. It has been observed that the majority of slow learners enjoy activities which are hand held and allow them to play an active role. It allows the child to learn by using his tactile sense, one that leaves a more lasting impression in his memory. Also ensure lessons are short and frequent rather than long and strenuous.

### Encouraging Oral Expression Instead of Written Reports

For slow learners, many writing assignments go un-attempted or are begun only half-heartedly because these learners recognize that their written product will not meet even minimal writing standards. A carefully organized taped response to an assignment might be considered. This has the advantage of avoiding spelling, syntax, and writing errors.

### Teaching them Learning Skills

Learning skills can be increased by teaching note-taking, outlining, and listening. These skills are acquired through observation by higher ability students, but they must be specifically taught to slow learners. Unless your slow learners are actively engaged in the learning process through interesting concrete visual stimuli, there will be little contact emotionally and intellectually with the content you are presenting. This contact can be attained most easily when you vary your instructional material often and organize it into bits small enough to ensure moderate-to-high rates of success

### Using Innovative Strategies

Several innovative strategies to deal with such slow learning

students to learn and enhance memory like:

- o Involve students with a practical model or case study of short time span and relaxed environment so that they can visualize or feel the situation.
- o Proceed in steps once the students are comfortable and involved in looking for solutions.
- o Involve them in activities discrete from routine home chorus like sports and excursions to motivate such students to learn without cramming monotonous textbooks.
- o Provide a variety of activities for learning such as painting a picture of a reading assignment.
- o Provide them ample opportunity for success.

Fortunately nowadays resources are available in libraries as well as online to develop learning habits to create interest for slow learners.

### Other Remedial Measures

Remedial Teaching is identifying slow learners and giving them the necessary guidance to help them overcome their problems, after identifying their areas of difficulty. Contrary to what is said, remedial teaching is done perfunctorily without identifying their areas of difficulty and underlying cause for lagging behind. Some students are unsympathetically branded as 'block heads' without an earnest attempt to know the real cause of their slow learning (Y. Sreedhar Rao).

### Teaching Them Simple To Complex

Learning takes place from simple to complex. If for some reason the student has not learnt the basics, it is futile to teach him the advanced topics. Remedial teaching is not revising the topics taught repeatedly. Careful analysis of the students' performance in the examination and diagnosing the areas of difficulty are key aspects in remedial teaching. Once the difficult areas are identified, the next task is to plan the learning experiences to teach the basics to understand the given topic.

### Teaching them Required Basic Mathematical Operations In Physics

Poor performance in physics can be remedied by first teaching the required basic mathematical operations.

### Activity-oriented learning

Student is central in the learning process. The learning experiences should be activity-oriented and the teaching should motivate and create interest in the student to learn on his own. When group discussions are held in the classroom, the slow learners are benefited much. Suitably tailored lesson plan by the teacher and careful monitoring by the school administration will help slow learners have a better grasp of all lessons in schools.

### Conclusion

It is possible to draw strong academic performance from slow learners through steady application of practical strategies. Joint efforts of both parents and teachers are important to achieve positive results. Knowledge of what you can do as a parent or teacher to help slow learners enables you to put in your best efforts in the right direction and contribute to the children's success in later years. Although the effort from the teacher's end is simple, yet the result at the end of the day is great enough to make a teacher feel proud of herself as well as her learners who had managed to overcome their weakness and come out with flying colors.

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