

**Teach only a few letters and words at a time.** Do not try to teach everything in one class.

**Practice letters that have straight lines first, then those that have a circle, then those that have diagonal lines.** Start with the capital letters first. The letters that have straight lines are the L, I, T, E, F, H. You do not need to teach the alphabet in order. It is okay to separate out the letters by the type of lines they have and start with the easy ones. The circle letters are Q, O, D, G, J, U, C, B. The diagonal letters are W, R, Y, A, K, Z, X, V, N, M. Teach the S last!

To teach the names of objects, use only one picture so they can focus better, and pick out 2 or 3 objects from the picture, no more. If you give them too much information at once, they will not be able to remember very well.

**Repeat the same 2 or 3 activities all week, or even all month, until you can see they have learned it well.** After they learn it, bring it back and review it from time to time. It is important to repeat, repeat, repeat, and practice, practice, practice. All people who play a sport have to practice and practice and practice so they can learn to do the activity automatically.

**Practice developing hand muscles that they have not used before.** Their hands have not needed to do some of the special movements that are required to shape our letters. The letters X, Z, N, M may be difficult for your students. Some might make a + sign, but not an X. Their hands have difficulty moving a pencil diagonally.

**Have students move their bodies to learn letters and words.** This helps them learn faster and remember better. Tape a set of letters to the floor and ask students to touch the letter with their foot as you call out the letter. Tape words or letters to the wall, and give the student a ball to throw. Ask the student to throw the ball at the word or letter as you call it out to them.

Tape a word or letter to the back of a chair and ask students to circle the chair three times, chanting the word or letter before they sit on the chair. After they sit down, ask them to say the word. Use the senses of touch, taste and smell in order to help them remember better. Sitting in a chair and looking at a paper is not a good way to help students remember.

**2. Act lessons out with them.** These activities proved useful to me in my classes:

- Set up real-life scenarios like ordering food or asking where something is in the store.
- Demonstrate action verbs and states of feeling in a physical manner - exaggerate them if you can. Their favorite comedy actors in their countries are those that pantomime actions.
- Accentuate sounds of the language in lessons designed to focus on a particular sound (not for all communication in the class, just for short times on a particular sound that is the focus of the lesson).
- Magnify the rhythm of the language (again, for short times on a particular phrase or story that is the focus of the lesson).
- Create a safe space for errors (avoid correcting any student in a way that might make them feel he or she has been singled out - avoid saying "no" to any one in particular.
- Laughter & music & movement helps to enhance memory retention and to link new information to previous knowledge

**Focus on what they can do (not on what they can't do)**

- Showcase the work they have done by posting it around the room.

**4. Bring their world into the classroom**

- Use items they actually use in their daily life:
  - Foods (plastic fruits and vegetables), Household Items, Tools, Phones
- Connect the print-related activities they need to do in everyday life to classroom lessons:
  - Filling out forms
  - Signing their name
  - Saying their Address, Telephone, SS#