

There are no nationally standardised tests for lipreading ability, possibly as there is no standard size/shape for mouths and there is a vast difference in the range of people's mouth movements. Only 20 to 30% of speech sounds have visible components and speakers rarely stand in a way which would provide optimum lipreading. Even a good lipreader will not always be able to follow everything said in good lipreading conditions. Learning new vocabulary by lipreading alone is very difficult because there are insufficient clues for spelling. However, for many deaf children lipreading is a useful addition to what they hear via hearing aids (which often do not provide a full range of speech sounds) and should be provided where possible. Teachers should consider the following factors in order that lipreaders – including many children without hearing aids – would benefit.

- **The optimum lipreading distance is about 1½ metres (5 feet) putting the mouth and chin area in focus (Manchester University Ed Aud course 1987) BUT optimum distance from hearing aid/ Cochlear Implant microphone is around 80 to 90cm.**
- **Light source must be behind the lipreader's head, illuminating the speaker's face**
- **No light source behind the speaker's head (ie the teacher, or the pupil who is answering)**
- **No visual distraction within the lipreader's direct or peripheral field of vision**
- **Ideally the speaker's head should be at the same height above the floor as the lipreader's**
- **The teacher should avoid nodding or other head movements when talking**
- **The teacher should not move around the room, stand at the back of the class, turn his/her back to write on the board etc. while talking**
- **Wherever possible, visual aids should be used to confirm the focus and detail of the lesson, to provide better clues for lipreading.**
- **The speaker's mouth should not be obscured with books, papers, hand etc**
- **HOMEWORK or messages given out to a group: instructions should be on the board with time to be copied *before* the class start packing up and moving OR typed for the child, who also needs prompting if s/he needs to take a book or equipment home. Relying on friends to pass on information is not professional; neither child can be blamed for mistakes.
- Parents of younger hearing aid/ CI users will need written information (a diary?) about the taught day in order to talk about their day/ help with the homework.**
- **When lipreading is not possible –video or audio sources, computer programs etc, consult a Teacher of the Deaf or Educational Audiologist for what differentiation is needed, if any.**
- **Most children with permanent hearing difficulties will qualify for some modification of normal test/exam conditions ranging from sitting within lipreading distance of the invigilator to having a 1:1 clear speaker in a separate room. The deaf child's Teacher of the Deaf or Educational Audiologist is qualified to give written recommendations.**