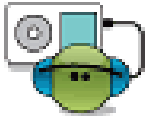


Title**Author****Summary****Objectives****Keywords**

Teaching ICT to pupils and students with learning disabilities

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A summary of the principles:

Step 1: (evaluating)

To be able to teach right ICT skills (to repeat, to deepen and to learn new skills) and to motivate the learner, teachers should know the level of the learner's knowledge of ICT. This should be done individually and carefully, to promote and to practice accessible teaching.

Step 2: (choosing topics)

Teachers must sort out the ICT skills that are important for the learner (personally for himself, from the curriculum point of view and/or just to support basic learning skills e.g. reading and writing). Teachers should not teach only those ICT skills that they know by themselves. Nor the skills that they hardly ever use or know by themselves – if that is the case every reasonable action or enough time should be taken to study the skills and the right terminology before teaching SEN students. This is one of the most important paradigms.

Step 3: (planning and implementing)

ICT skills should be divided into smaller partial skills. There should be enough time to learn a partial skill well enough, before continuing to another. This shows to the learner that there is no rush to learn nor need to go forward before the skill is really learnt - and that everybody's individual learning speed is taken under consideration.

ICT teaching should always start from something that is familiar to the learner. It is also important to take a notice of the special interests and wishes of the learner (disability, hobbies, likes and dislikes etc.). With this kind of approach, the learner will gain more motivation to learn ICT skills. It's more useful to all! Put yourself in the learner's shoes and think how motivated you would be, if you would need to make a presentation about something that you can't really stand of.

Teachers should pay attention to the terminology that they using during their teaching. The terminology should be the same all the time, not just in spoken language but also in all written materials (in study books, instruction/works sheets and exercise files, but also on the white or black boards). It would be perfect, if the used terminology would be in plain language. If that is not possible, the used terminology should be widely well known (not found by the teacher him/herself). Unfortunately this is still a challenge for most of the teachers, even for some ICT teachers, but a very relevant and important issue to be understood and taken into consideration when teaching ICT skills to students with special needs.

ICT Lessons should always be carried out in a positive atmosphere, where errors can be made and even silly questions can be asked. Learners should also be encouraged and supported to help out theirs piers, since this will promote the positive output of learning ICT. Teaching should not be only about ICT skills – it should always have a theme from the curriculum or from the everyday life of the learner(s). Before teaching a new skill, teachers should explain and show to the learners, what they will learn during the lesson. The tasks and targets (What and why) should be open and explained to the learners too. This will come handy later on, when self evaluation and setting the goals by leaner him/herself will take place. ICT teaching can be fun, effective and concrete (take the examples from the real world, when explaining e.g. filing the computer files).

Don't touch the mouse – do not do things for them! Just explain verbally, have supportive material available (for those who can read) and let them try out by themselves – but never leave a learner in a despair. And don't forget that the key to learn ICT-skills is simple, it's only about repeating, repeating and repeating, particularly when teaching ICT-skills to learners with special needs. But the most important part is to remember to give positive and individual feedback to all learners, even from minor things or improvement – this will raise their motivation to learn even more ICT skills.

Self assessment tasks



Step 4: (evaluation)

Evaluation is a vital part of teaching and learning. Make evaluation an important part of you ICT lessons – something that happens all year round. Make it easy and simple for everyone including you – since there is hardly neither enough of time nor a point of doing proper surveys. The evaluation talks at the end of every lesson are an easy and rational way of organizing feedback. Another good way is to have short (2-3 questions) evaluation sheets with smiley faces available for collection (needs proper guidance and instruction for SEN students). A mixture of evaluation talks, evaluation sheets and short personal interviews during or after the lessons is the best way to gain quality feedback, new ideas and mostly to make the learners think, what they have learnt during the lesson (can also be asked at the opening of the next lesson).

Works cited

