Useful websites:

Benefits of Multi-Sensory Learning

Who does this approach support?

- Multi-sensory teaching is an effective strategy for all learners. However, for learners who struggle to make progress when teaching is mainly delivered through auditory input, Multi-sensory teaching is most effective.
- Dyslexic learners, Autistic learners, learners with ADHD, learners with language processing differences or other special educational needs are all highly supported through a Multi-sensory approach to teaching.

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MULTI-SENSORY TEACHING

A guide for Practitioners

What does this mean?

An approach to teaching where careful consideration is given to ensure that the learner has to use more than one sense when engaging in their learning.

A Little More Information

- Multi-sensory teaching is considered one of the most effective approaches to supporting learners in acquiring new knowledge and skills and being able to recall this information in the future.

Why does it work?

When a learner is able to engage more than one sense at a time whilst they are learning it helps their brain to create more neural connections to that information. This means that if one pathway begins to weaken over time then the information can still be retrieved using another pathway. Research into memory and retrieval demonstrates that when learning is delivered through movement, touch, imagery, sound pattern and rhythms that recall of information is strongest.

Multi-sensory teaching and learning is more exciting and active in nature. This prevents passive learning where a learner's focus and concentration may drift. Instead they are actively engaged, looking, manipulating and moving. The learner's concentration is less likely to drift when engaged in this way.

Every learner also has preferred learning styles, for example some learners learn best when physically doing a task and exploring concepts in a "hands on" manner. Multi-sensory teaching supports all learning styles and preferences.

Multi-sensory teaching also allows the learner greater support in truly understanding complex concepts. Being able to physically see, manipulate or explore resources whilst learning about a concept, allows the learner to understand and make links to previous experiences and knowledge.

Some Examples

Handwriting

Using ribbons to make the letter shapes.
Using squeezy water bottles to make letter shapes on the floor or wall outside.
Practising writing letter shapes in shaving foam or sand.
Finger painting making dots along the outline of a letter shape.
Saying a rhyme as your form a letter shape.

Reading

Using magnetic tiles to make and read words.
Holding large letters and moving closer together with a friend to segment and blend the letters.
Going on a word hunt outside.
Finding words in a dark den using a torch to read them.

Stories

Using puppets alongside stories.
Acting out stories.
Using glitter, sand, spray water bottles and small characters to engage the learners as you read.
Using gestures and actions alongside stories.