

LEARNING SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

Anxiety Teacher Guide

Purpose

Practical classroom strategies, accommodations, printable learning support ideas, and assessment options designed specifically for ASL teachers working with students who have anxiety.

What is Anxiety?

Anxiety involves persistent worry, fear, or nervousness that can affect participation, focus, and willingness to take risks in the classroom. Students with anxiety are capable learners who often thrive with predictable routines, low-pressure participation options, and a classroom environment that feels safe and supportive.

Student Strengths

- Conscientious and prepared
- Thoughtful and detail-aware
- Empathetic toward classmates
- Strong sense of responsibility
- Careful, accurate work
- Reflective learner

Teaching Strategies

- Preview lesson plans and upcoming changes in advance
- Offer low-pressure ways to participate (small group first)
- Give advance warning before calling on a student
- Build in predictable routines and clear expectations
- Allow practice/rehearsal time before public signing
- Check in privately rather than singling out in front of peers

Learning Support Activities

- Practice signing in pairs before whole-group sharing
- Visual "what to expect today" schedule cards
- Optional video self-recording instead of live performance
- Calm-down corner with a visual coping-skills card
- Predictable warm-up routine at the start of class

Assessment Ideas

- Private, one-on-one assessments over public performance
- Advance notice of assessment format and expectations
- Option to record video responses instead of live signing
- Untimed or extended-time options where appropriate

Things to Avoid

- Calling on students unexpectedly without warning
- Requiring unrehearsed performance in front of the class
- Surprise changes to routine or assessment format
- Assuming quietness or hesitation means lack of effort

Remember

Every student is unique. Use these strategies together with each student's IEP, Section 504 Plan, school policies, and professional judgment. The goal is not to lower expectations, but to provide meaningful access to learning.