RECOGNIZING SPECIAL NEEDS OF LEFT-HANDED PUPILS IN WRITING

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Being a left-handed is not easy. I can still remember during my elementary years. I was having hard time in writing. I was forced to hold a pencil in my right hand and even hit my hand whenever I wrote with my left hand. With these experiences I began to dislike being left-handed.

In a classroom situation, almost all children are right-handed when they write and that’s the normal scenario in writing, but that’s not always. There are some left-handed pupils. Having such kind of learners seek extra considerations from the teacher. These kinds of learners have special needs most specially in developing their handwriting skills.

Left-handed pupils need a patient and knowledgeable teacher, especially grade 1 teacher since the foundations of basic writing skills and habits started at earlier grades. Switching and forcing them to write with their right hand is not the instant and effective way to develop their good writing skills. There are instances that even teaching them to write with their right hand will not work, it is the same with my own experience. Let us admit and face that there are inborn left-handed and tend to be left-handed. The only thing teachers can do is to allow them to be a left-handed but teach them to write correctly with their hand preference.
Teaching left-handed is not the same as teaching the right-handed pupil how to write. Teachers should understand and know how to teach left-handed pupils appropriately. There’s a lot of things need to be taken in thought like seating arrangement, position of the paper, arms and wrist. “Teach left-handed children to remember three things as they learn to write; grip the pencil 1 inch to 1.5 inches from the point, tilt the paper so that arm is at right angle to bottom edge of paper and write with the hand below the writing line and the wrist straight”, (Holder, M.K, 2003).

Seating arrangement is also a problem to a left-handed pupil since most of the seatmates are the opposite hand, there are tendency of banging their elbows against each other. With the bill passed by the House of Representative, Section 3 of HB 8154 requiring all public and private schools in the country to provide armchairs for the left-handed students, equivalent to 10 percent of the student population, the said bill will be a great help in addressing the needs of the left-handed learners. These pupils can now write comfortably and with proper posture and position of paper, arm and wrist. Their elbows will not crash anymore to their seatmate.

Remember that teachers should always recognize individual differences among learners. These differences should not hinder the attainment of quality education among pupils. Seeking and employing the best and effective way for pupils’ learning is the goal of every teacher. Never neglect the special needs of single learner. Bear in mind that every learner is unique and has needs that need to be addressed.
References:


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