

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

SPEAKING

⇒ Have you ever worked with an intellectually impaired person? Describe your experience.

READING and SPEAKING

Read the introductory text below. (Student A reads Part A, student B reads Part B.) Then report the information presented in the text to each other. Paraphrase the original language (don't read).

Part A

An intellectual disability is characterized by a combination of deficits in both **cognitive functioning** and **adaptive behaviour**. The severity of the intellectual disability is determined by the discrepancy between the individual's capabilities in learning and in and the expectations of the social environment. The large majority of individuals considered intellectually disabled are in the mild range with an IQ of 50 to 70.

Part B

Limitations in intellectual functioning often include **difficulties with memory recall and task/skill generalization**. These students may also demonstrate **a tendency towards low motivation**. Issues in adaptive behaviour may include **difficulties with conceptual skills, social skills and practical skills**. Finally, individuals with intellectual disabilities often exhibit **deficits in self-determination skills** as well, including skill areas such as **choice making, problem solving, and goal setting**.

READING and VOCABULARY: Down syndrome: Typical signs and health related problems

1 Read the text and choose appropriate words to fill in each gap 1 – 10.

2 Get ready to explain the meaning of the words/phrases highlighted in grey.

Down syndrome

Down syndrome is the most common and readily identifiable chromosomal condition associated with intellectual disabilities. It is caused by a chromosomal abnormality: for some unexplained reason, an accident in cell development results in 47 instead of the usual 46 chromosomes. This **extra/addition 1** chromosome changes the orderly development of the body and brain. In most cases, the diagnosis of Down syndrome is made according to results from a chromosome test **administered/given 2** shortly after birth.

Approximately 4,000 children with Down syndrome are born in the U.S. each year, or about 1 in every 800 to 1,000 live births. In the Czech Republic there is 1 child with Down syndrome in 1,500 live births. **Although/However 3** parents of any age may have a child with Down syndrome, the incidence is higher for women over 35. Most common forms of the syndrome do not usually **happen/occur 4** more than once in a family.

There are over 50 clinical signs of Down syndrome, but it is **low/rare 5** to find all or even most of them in one person. Some common characteristics include: slower physical as well as intellectual development, shorter stature, small head, short neck, short low-set ears, **poor muscle tone**, hyper-flexibility, **slanting eyes with folds of skin at the inner corners**, flat bridge of the nose and short broad hands with a single **crease** across the palm on one or both hands.

Besides having a distinct physical **appearance/form 6**, children with Down syndrome frequently have specific health-related problems. A lowered **resistance to infection** makes these children more prone to **respiratory problems**. Visual problems such as short- and long-sightedness are higher **at/in 7** those with Down syndrome, as are mild to moderate hearing loss and speech difficulty. Approximately one third of babies born with Down

syndrome have heart **errors/defects 8**, most of which are now successfully **repairable/correctable 9**. Children with Down syndrome may have a tendency to become obese as they **grow/give 10** older. Besides having negative social implications, this weight gain **threatens** these individuals' health and **longevity**. A supervised diet and exercise program may help reduce this problem.

(Adapted from: <http://www.parentcenterhub.org/downsyndrome/>; picture from: <http://www.ds-health.com/images/trisomy.gif>)

LISTENING (Test practice): Educating a child with Down syndrome

Comment on the following:

⇒ **Should students with intellectual disabilities be educated individually, should they receive special education, or should they be included/integrated in regular classrooms?**

Watch a video showing Nick Halley's educational experience. Complete the missing information in the notes below. (Source: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ji3R30PT1PQ>)

1 Nick Halley is _____ years old.

2 He is the _____ of three kids.

3 Nick has been placed in a _____ classroom.

4 The school provides aid or independence _____.

5 Most children with DS have _____ learning disabilities.

6 Children with DS learn with _____ formats.

7 Other children _____ from Nick's presence in class.

8 Nick's parents started a _____.

SPEAKING: EXAM PRACTICE 1

Discuss the following two questions with a partner.

You have 3 to 4 minutes to get ready (brainstorm and write down the ideas you'd like to discuss).

The discussion should last 6 minutes.

1 Is it difficult or easy to bring up a child with intellectual disability in the Czech Republic nowadays? What **obstacles** do parents of children with impaired intellect often **face**?

2 What kind of **family/social background** do children with intellectual disability need?

KEY

CLASS/GROUP DISCUSSION

- ⇒ Have you ever worked/been in contact with an individual with intellectual disability? Describe your experience.
- ⇒ How would you describe the current attitudes towards individuals with intellectual disabilities in Czech society?

Scan the text below to find the answer to the following question:

- ⇒ What difficulties do individuals with intellectual disabilities commonly experience?

An intellectual disability is characterized by a combination of deficits in both cognitive functioning and adaptive behaviour. The severity of the intellectual disability is determined by the discrepancy between the individual's capabilities in learning and in and the expectations of the social environment. The large majority of individuals considered intellectually disabled are in the mild range with an IQ of 50 to 70.

Limitations in intellectual functioning often include difficulties with memory recall and task/skill generalization. These students may also demonstrate a tendency towards low motivation. Issues in adaptive behaviour may include difficulties with conceptual skills, social skills and practical skills. Finally, individuals with intellectual disabilities often exhibit deficits in self-determination skills as well, including skill areas such as choice making, problem solving, and goal setting.

READING: Down syndrome: Typical signs and health related problems

1 Read the text and choose the most suitable option a, b or c to fill in each gap.

2 Make sure you understand the meaning of the words/phrases highlighted in grey.

Definition of Down syndrome

Down syndrome is the most common and readily identifiable chromosomal condition associated with mental disabilities. It is caused by a chromosomal abnormality: for some unexplained reason, an accident in cell development results in 47 instead of the usual 46 chromosomes. This 1 chromosome changes the orderly development of the body and brain. In most cases, the diagnosis of Down syndrome is made according to results from a chromosome test 2 shortly after birth.

- 1 a) extra b) plus
2 a) conducted b) given

Incidence

Approximately 4,000 children with Down syndrome are born in the U.S. each year, or about 1 in every 800 to 1,000 live births. 3 parents of any age may have a child with Down syndrome, the incidence is

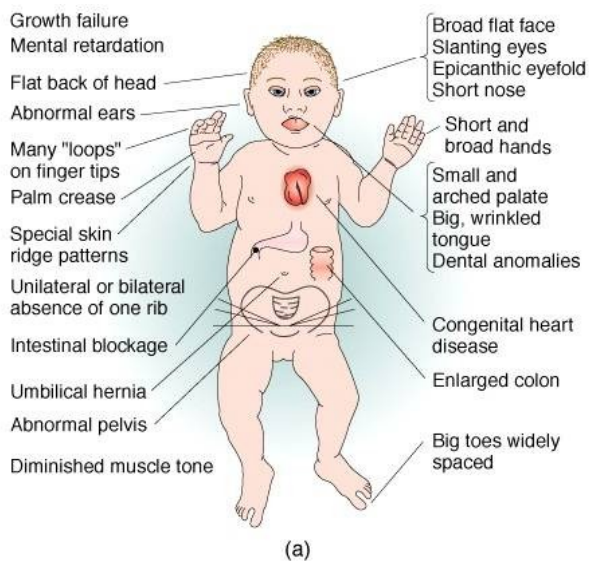
higher for women over 35. Most common forms of the syndrome do not usually 4 more than once in a family.

3 a) Although b) However

4 a) happen b) occur

Characteristics

There are over 50 clinical signs of Down syndrome, but it is 5 to find all or even most of them in one person. Some common characteristics include:



- Poor muscle tone
- Slanting eyes with folds of skin at the inner corners
- Hyper-flexibility (excessive ability to extend the joints)
- Short, broad hands with a single crease across the palm on one or both hands
- Broad feet with short toes
- Flat bridge of the nose
- Short, low-set ears
- Short neck
- Small head
- Small oral cavity
- Short, high-pitched cries in infancy
- Shorter stature
- Slower physical as well as intellectual development

5 a) low b) rare

Health-related problems

Besides having a distinct physical 6, children with Down syndrome frequently have specific health-related problems. A lowered resistance to infection makes these children more prone to respiratory problems. Visual problems such as crossed eyes and short- and long-sightedness are higher 7 those with Down syndrome, as are mild to moderate hearing loss and speech difficulty.

Approximately one third of babies born with Down syndrome have heart8, most of which are now successfully 9. Children with Down syndrome may have a tendency to become obese as they 10 older. Besides having negative social implications, this weight gain threatens these individuals' health and longevity. A supervised diet and exercise program may help reduce this problem.

6 a) appearance b) form

- 7 a) in b) at
8 a) errors b) defects
9 a) repairable b) correctable
10 a) grow b) give

LISTENING: Educating a child with Down syndrome

Comment on the following:

- ⇒ Should children with intellectual disabilities be educated individually, should they receive special education or should they be included/integrated in regular classrooms?

Watch a video showing Nick Halley's educational experience. Complete the missing information in the notes below. (Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ji3R30PT1PQ>)

- 1 Nick Halley is eight years old.
- 2 He is the youngest of three kids.
- 3 Nick has been placed in a regular classroom.
- 4 The school provides aid or independence facilitator.
- 5 Most children with DS have moderate learning disabilities.
- 6 Children with DS learn with highly visual formats.
- 7 Other children benefit from Nick's presence in class.
- 8 Nick's parents started a non-profit foundation.

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