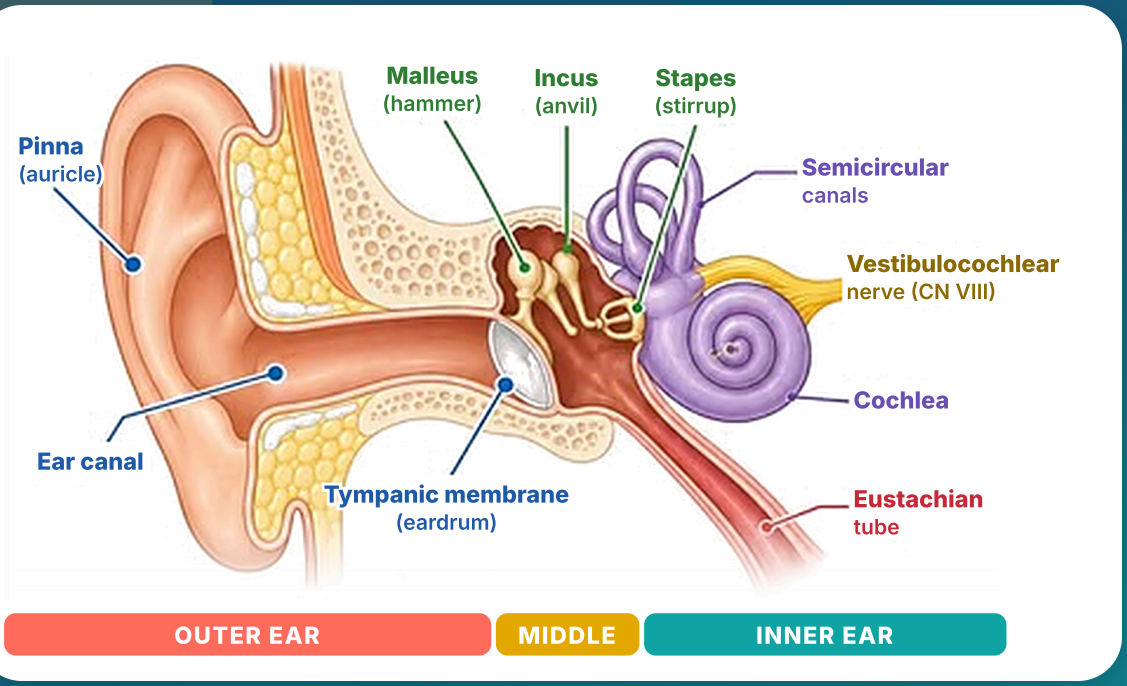
APPROACH EDUCATION
Making Education Approachable, No Matter the Learner.

Free Edition
GRADES 9–12

FREE EDITION

All About My Hearing

A Teen's Guide to Hearing, Technology, Self-Advocacy, and Life After High School



Identity | Ear Science | Degree of Hearing Loss | Self-Advocacy

Free Edition • Grades 9–12

ABOUT ME

Your Hearing, Your Identity

There is no single “right” way to be Deaf, deaf, hard of hearing, or hearing. People describe themselves in different ways, and that can change over time.

Term	What it often means
Deaf (capital D)	A cultural identity. Members of the Deaf community share a language (in the U.S., usually American Sign Language), history, values, and traditions.
deaf (lowercase)	Describes hearing level: little or no functional hearing.
Hard of hearing	Some hearing, with differences that affect access to sound and speech.
DHH	Short for Deaf and Hard of Hearing; often used by schools and programs.
Hearing loss / hearing difference	Medical and everyday terms some people use. Others prefer not to describe hearing as a “loss.”
CODA	Child of Deaf Adults: a hearing person raised by Deaf parents.

ASL is a complete language with its own grammar, word order, and regional variations. It is not “English on the hands.” Deaf communities around the world have their own sign languages.

Reflect. Circle any words you use for yourself, then explain in your own words.

Deaf | deaf | hard of hearing | DHH | person with hearing loss | cochlear implant user | hearing aid user | signer | bilingual (ASL + English) | still figuring it out | other: _____

When people ask about my hearing, I usually say...

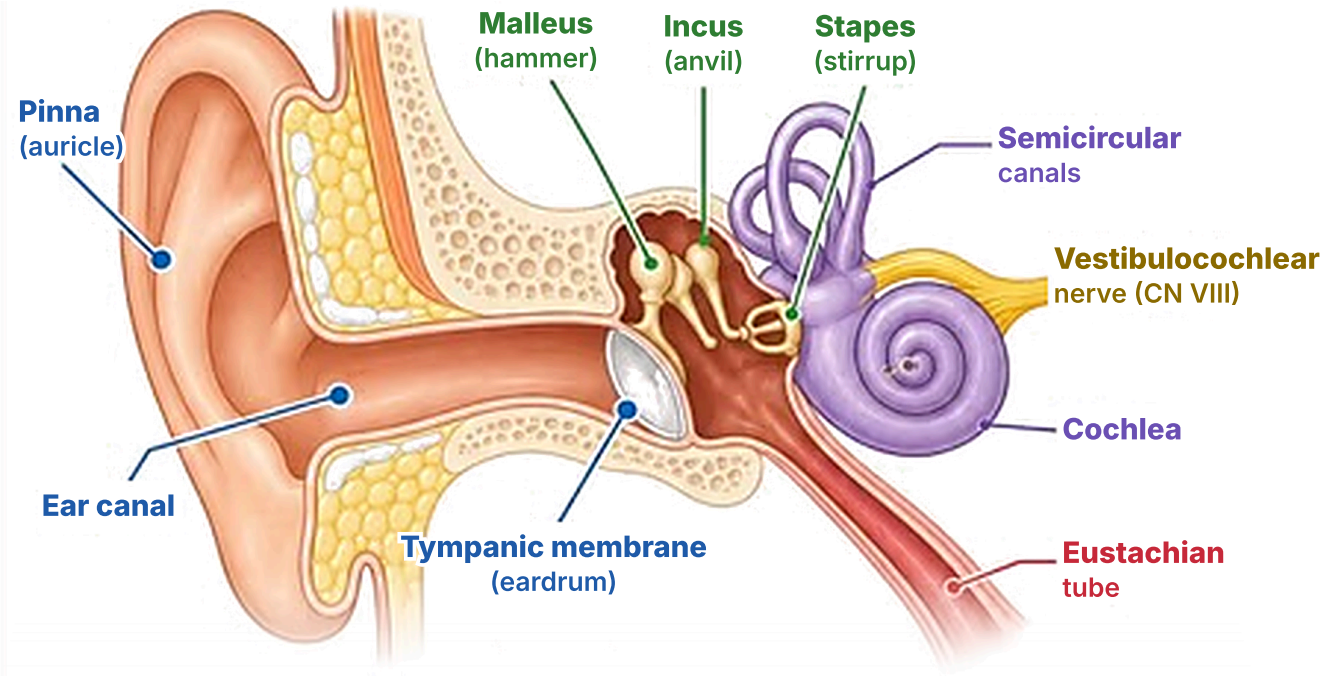
Something about my identity that I'm proud of is...

One thing I wish more hearing people understood is...

EAR SCIENCE

The Ear Up Close

Your auditory system has three parts that work as a team, plus the hearing nerve and brain that make sense of sound.



Outer ear

The pinna and ear canal collect sound and channel it to the eardrum. Earwax and tiny hairs protect the canal.

Middle ear

An air-filled space. The eardrum and three ossicles (tiny bones) amplify vibrations about 20 times before they reach the inner ear.

Inner ear

The cochlea changes vibrations into electrical signals. The semicircular canals sense movement and balance.

Tonotopic map: Inside the cochlea, different spots respond to different pitches. The base (near the oval window) responds to **high** pitches; the tip (apex) responds to **low** pitches. That's why audiograms test many frequencies.

Quick check: Which part would a cochlear implant electrode be placed in? Which part does an ENT place ear tubes in?

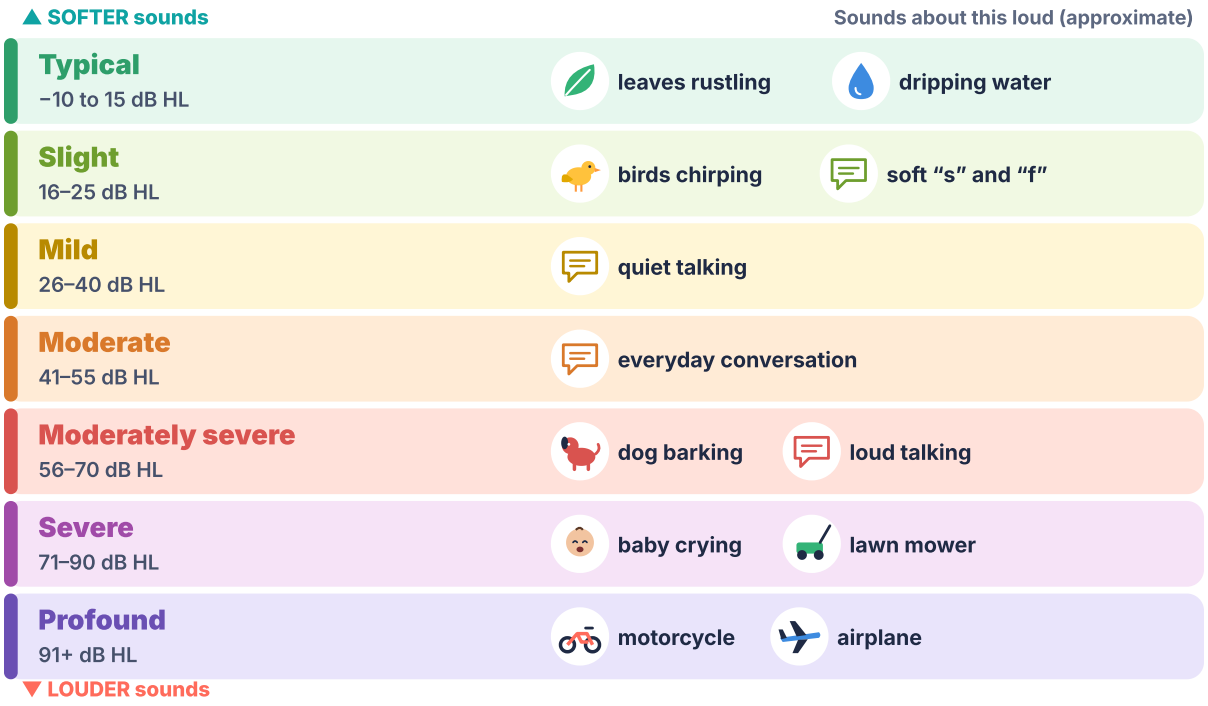
Cochlear implant: _____ **Ear tubes:** _____

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AUDIOGRAMS

Degree of Hearing Loss

Degree describes how loud sounds must be to be detected without technology. Audiologists describe it for each ear and often summarize it using the pure-tone average (PTA).



Degree is only part of the picture. Real-world access also depends on the **pattern** (e.g., a sloping loss affects high-pitch consonants), **speech clarity** (word recognition score), distance, background noise, fatigue, and whether you're wearing technology (**aided** vs. **unaided**).

Match each PTA to its degree.

A. 12 dB HL _____ **B.** 33 dB HL _____

C. 48 dB HL _____ **D.** 63 dB HL _____

E. 82 dB HL _____ **F.** 104 dB HL _____

Answers: A typical · B mild · C moderate · D moderately severe · E severe · F profound

Degree ranges: ASHA. Sound examples are approximate; actual levels vary with distance and source.

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SELF-ADVOCACY

Self-Advocacy in Real Life

Self-advocacy means knowing what you need, and asking for it clearly and respectfully. It gets easier with practice.

A simple formula: ① Name the situation → ② Say what you need → ③ Offer a solution → ④ Follow up if needed.
"I'm missing some of the discussion because people are talking over each other. Could we take turns, or could someone type key points in the chat?"

For each situation, write what you would say or sign.

1. Your substitute teacher doesn't know about your accommodations and turns off the captions.

2. In a group project, everyone talks at once and you keep missing ideas.

3. Your coach gives directions from across the field during practice.

4. At a job interview, the interviewer asks, "Will your hearing be a problem?"

5. Your remote mic isn't working and the teacher says, "Just sit closer."

6. A friend keeps saying "never mind" when you ask them to repeat something.

Talking about hearing at work: You decide whether, when, and how to share information about your hearing. Under the ADA, employers can't ask about disabilities before a job offer, but they can ask whether you can do the job's essential tasks, with or without reasonable accommodations.

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About Approach Education

Approach Education creates thoughtful, accessible learning resources for students of every ability and communication style, and for the families and professionals who support them.

Also in this series: *All About My Hearing*, Elementary Edition (Grades K–5) and Parent & Caregiver Edition.

Website: _____

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Want more?

The complete High School Edition (26 pages) also includes: Start Here, Structures & Functions, How Hearing Works & Types of Differences, Label the Ear, Reading an Audiogram, Audiogram Practice, My Audiogram & Hearing Report, Hearing Technology Deep Dive, My Tech Toolkit & Troubleshooting, Communication Access Tools, and more.

Find it at: _____

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