



DiverseMind

GUIDE FOR PEER LEARNERS



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INTRODUCTION



What is Neurodiversity?

What is neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity is the idea that everyone's brain works in its own unique way. Just like people have different eye colours, heights, and personalities, our brains also think, learn, and process information differently.

Why is it important?

- Neurodiversity reminds us that there's no single "right" way to think or learn.
- Some people may be good at solving puzzles, others at remembering details, while others might be especially creative or empathetic.
- These differences are valuable and can help teams, schools, and communities to be stronger and more innovative.

Examples of neurodivergence:

Some people's brains work in ways that are described with terms such as:

- **Autism:** differences in communication, social interaction, and sensory experiences.
- **ADHD:** differences in attention, focus, and energy levels.
- **Dyslexia:** differences in reading and language processing.
- **Dyscalculia:** differences in understanding numbers and maths.



Key Message:

Neurodiversity celebrates brain differences as a natural part of human diversity. Instead of thinking about “strengths” and “weaknesses,” it helps us see that everyone has a mix of abilities. By understanding and respecting these differences, we can create more supportive and inclusive schools and communities.



CHAPTER 1

AUTISM SPECTRUM



DiverseMind

WHAT IS AUTISM SPECTRUM?

Imagine your brain is like super smart computer.

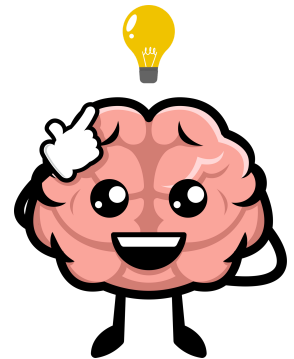


Everyone's computer works a little differently: some process pictures faster, others are great at solving puzzles, remembering details, or creating music.

For people with autism, their computer works in a special way.

Autism Spectrum (ASD) means that a person's brain sees, feels, and thinks in a different way - **not better or worse, just different!**

It's called a **spectrum** because every autistic **person is unique** - each one experiences the world in their own special way.



Like different colors blending on a rainbow, their abilities, sensitivities, and ways of thinking can vary widely.



Some like quiet spaces and clear routines, others love talking about their favourite topics for hours - and both ways are perfectly fine.

Autism can influence how a person experiences emotions, social situations, and everyday life.

Autism isn't something that needs to change - it's simply a different operating system - one that experiences the world in its own amazing and individual way.



***AUTISM MEANS THINKING DIFFERENTLY
— AND THAT DIFFERENCE MAKES THE
WORLD RICHER!***



WHAT MIGHT THE AUTISM SPECTRUM LOOK OR FEEL LIKE?

Autism can change the way a person feels, thinks, and experiences the world.

Everyone on the spectrum is different, but there are some **common things they might experience**:



They sometimes understand or react more slowly, especially when many things happen at once.

They may notice tiny details that other people don't see — colours, patterns, or small changes around them.



Sounds, lights, or smells can feel much stronger and become overwhelming.

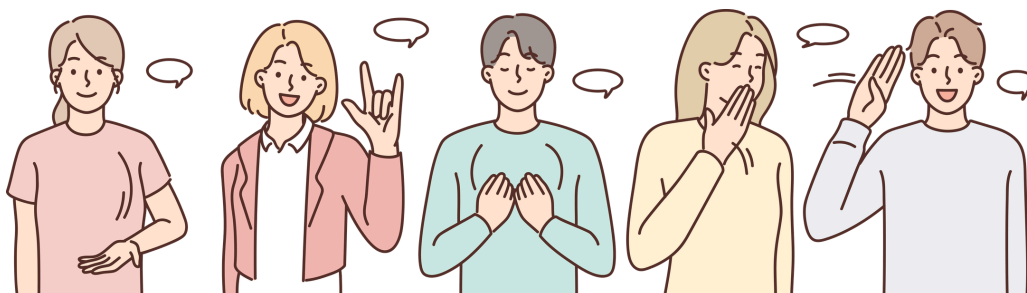
They often feel emotions very strongly. Happiness, stress, or frustration can be more intense — and sometimes harder to express with words or facial expressions.





Social situations can be confusing or tiring, even when they want to connect with others.

It may be hard for them to understand the rules of conversation — for example, when to speak, how to change the topic, or whether someone is joking.



It could be difficult for them to read the tone of voice, facial expressions or gestures, so they don't always know whether someone is joking or serious.

REMEMBER

A person with autism isn't "strange" — they just experience the world in their own unique way.



HOW CAN YOU RECOGNIZE A PEER WITH AUTISM?

You might notice that your classmates:

***Enjoy spending time
alone or with a small
group***

***Don't always make eye
contact or reply right
away***

***Can get anxious when
things change
suddenly***

***Unusual tone or rhythm
of speech, e.g. ending
each sentence like a
question.***

***Prefer routines and
clear plans***

***Find jokes, sarcasm,
confusing***

***Find loud noises
or
bright lights
uncomfortable***

***Say exactly what they mean
— without sarcasm or
hidden message***



REMEMBER

This isn't "weird" — it's just a different way of thinking,
learning, and feeling.

What matters most is understanding and kindness.





WHAT CAN YOU DO? HOW TO BE A GOOD FRIEND ?



Be patient – give time to think and answer

Listen carefully – don't interrupt



Speak clearly and kindly – say what you mean.

Include them – invite them, but respect their comfort zone.



Be understanding – loud sounds or bright lights might be stressful.

Appreciate their strengths – many autistic people are creative, focused, and honest friends.



REMEMBER

Inclusion starts with empathy.



HOW TO GET ALONG AND GROW TOGETHER ?

- ✓ **Communicate clearly** – use simple words and speak calmly.
- ✓ **Listen carefully** – wait and give your classmate time to answer.
- ✓ **Ask, don't guess** – if you're not sure what someone needs, just ask politely
- ✓ **Use kind words and gestures** – smiles, thumbs-up, or friendly tone can show support.
- ✓ **Be a team player** – help others and share ideas.
- ✓ **Think before reacting** – take a breath if you feel angry or sad.
- ✓ **Notice feelings** – if your friend seems upset, speak gently or give them space.
- ✓ **Show empathy** – try to imagine how the other person might feel in that moment
- ✓ **Respect differences** – everyone is unique and special.
- ✓ **Stay calm if plans change** – changes can be hard; your calm helps others stay calm too.
- ✓ **Be flexible** – not everything will go the way you expect, and that's okay.





GAME 1 “SHIFT”

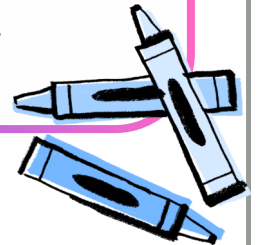


PARTICIPANTS

- **Students aged 10–15**
- **2-3 people per team**
- **Duration: 45 minutes**

GAME CONTENTS

- Simple materials for a shared activity (e.g., colored cards, blocks, puzzles, markers),
- Rule cards for introducing changes
- Emotion tracker cards
- Board or sheet for recording reflections
- Clock or timer



The Purpose of this Game

To help students practise flexible thinking, adapt to unexpected changes, communicate clearly, and manage their emotions when rules shift. It promotes empathy, patience, cooperation, and calm problem-solving.



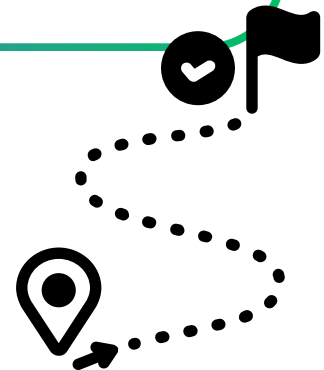
GAME 1 "SHIFT"

PREPARATION

- 1 Create a calm, safe, and cooperative atmosphere.
- 2 You'll get a simple task to complete (like copying a pattern or drawing from instructions).
- 3 Partway through, the teacher will say "**SHIFT!**" and change the rules (for example: no talking, switch roles, use gestures only).
- 4 You keep going and try your best with the new rules. Afterwards, we chat about how it felt, how we handled the changes, and what helped us work together.

How to Win

- There is **no traditional winner**.
- Success is measured by:
 - How well teams adapt to changing rules
 - How clearly they communicate
 - How effectively they support each other
 - The quality of their reflection at the end



"We have fun, we collaborate, and we observe what happens to us when the world suddenly works differently."



GAME 1 "SHIFT"

Gameplay



1. Start with a **simple task**, e.g.
 - Recreate a pattern with coloured cards
 - Draw a class trip plan together using instructions.
2. After a few minutes, the teacher calls "**SHIFT!**" and introduces a new rule such as:
 - "No talking—use actions only."
 - "Only your partner can touch the materials."
 - "Finish with your eyes closed."
3. Every 3–5 minutes, the rules will change again. Some examples:
 - "Switch roles."
 - "Speak one word at a time."
 - "Use only your left hand."
 - "Stop every 30 seconds and wave."
 - "Everyone must smile before moving."
4. Continue until the task is complete or time ends.
5. Finish with a **reflection discussion**.



Emotion Tracker

After each rule change, pause for 30 seconds and mark how you feel on your emotion card (like calm, confused, frustrated, or happy). Finally, discuss how your emotions changed during the activity and what helped you regain balance.

Emotional Tracker Card

How did my emotions change during the game ?

Mark how you felt in each round:

ROUND	RULE SHIFT	MY MOOD (SELECT THE
1		😊 😐 😞 😡 😊

GAME 1 “SHIFT”

Final Task: Meta-reflection

Reflection Questions



- *What was harder: talking without using actions, or acting without talking?*
- *How did you feel when your partner did something you didn't expect?*
- *What emotions did you notice while working together?*
- *How did you handle it when things weren't clear?*
- *What helped you keep working well with your partner?*
- *How is this game like real situations at school or in life?*

Teacher Tips:



Rule changes are key for building flexibility and reflecting on communication. The teacher should introduce them gradually, watch how students feel, and keep the environment safe and predictable so students can adapt without feeling overwhelmed.

Educational Value of the Game:



The game shows how changing rules affects feelings and actions. It teaches empathy, patience, and clear communication, and helps everyone practice adapting to change in a safe way.



Emotional Tracker Card

How did my emotions change during the game ?

Mark how you felt in each round:

ROUND	RULE SHIFT	MY MOOD (SELECT THE SMILEY)
1		    
2		    
3		    

ROUND	RULE SHIFT	MY MOOD (SELECT THE SMILEY)
1		    
2		    
3		    

ROUND	RULE SHIFT	MY MOOD (SELECT THE SMILEY)
1		    
2		    
3		    





**ARRANGE THE SEQUENCE SO THAT THE COLORS AND
NUMBERS APPEAR IN THE CORRECT ORDER:**

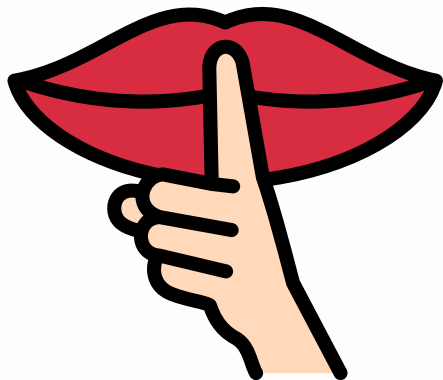
1 → 2 → 3 → 4 → 5.

 = A  = C  = L  = R  = T  = F

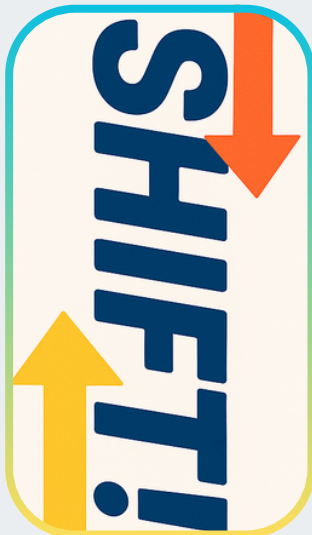
sekwencja szyfru:

A – F – L – C – R – A – T – F – C

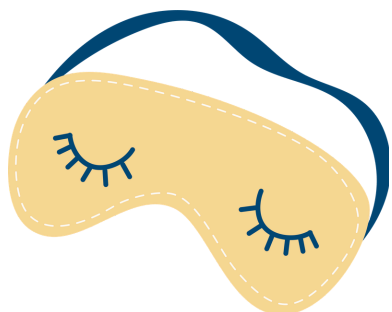
**CREATE A CODE BY ASSIGNING EACH COLOR THE APPROPRIATE
LETTER AND RECREATE THE CORRECT SEQUENCE ACCORDING TO
THE CODE.**



**NO TALKING—USE
ACTIONS ONLY**



**ONLY YOUR
PARTNER CAN
TOUCH THE
MATERIALS**



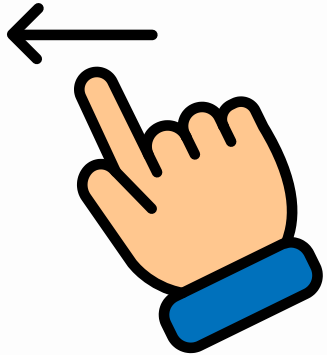
**FINISH WITH
YOUR EYES
CLOSED**



SWITCH ROLES



USE ONLY YOUR
LEFT HAND



EVERYONE MUST
SMILE BEFORE
MOVING



NEW PARTNER



Switch partners
and finish the task
started by
someone else.



STOP EVERY 30
SECONDS AND
WAVE



ONE WORD ONLY



You may use only one chosen word + gestures



BACK



You start from the end and arrange the elements in the opposite direction than before.



ROTATION CHALLENGE



Recreate the layout but rotated 90° or 180°.



ONLY RED COLOUR



GAME 2 “INSIDE OUT”

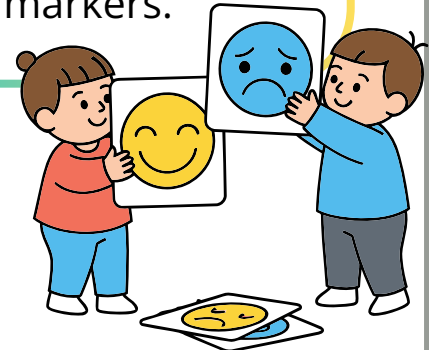


PARTICIPANTS

- Students aged 10–15
- 4-8 people per team
- Duration: 60-90minutes

GAME CONTENTS

- Emotion cards (emoticons)
- “Emotion Map” sheets (a human silhouette to mark where we feel emotions),
- Sticky notes,
- Colored markers.



The Purpose of this Game

Students learn how to recognise, name, and regulate emotions—in themselves and others.

Students learn to understand that emotions can be visible or hidden, and that different people experience them in different ways.

GAME 2 “INSIDE OUT”

PREPARATION

- 1 In this activity, you'll be in a calm and safe space where all the different ways you show your feelings are okay.
- 2 You'll learn that everyone feels emotions differently, and that's completely normal. No one will ask you why you feel a certain way—only how you feel.
- 3 There's no right or wrong way to express your emotions, and no one will judge how you show them.
- 4 If you need more time to think or express yourself, that's okay too.

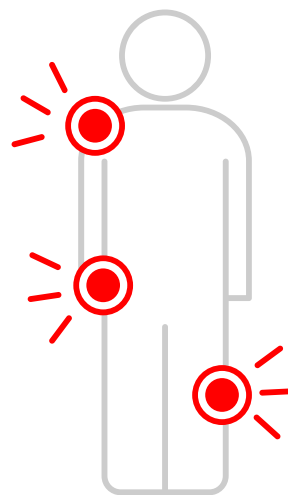
Game Play

1. **Warm-Up: Pick an Emotion Card**

- Teacher shows emotion cards.
- Students choose a card showing how they feel today—no explanation required.

2. **Create an Emotion Map**

- Students receive the “Map of Emotions” body outline.
- Using colours, symbols, or shapes, they mark where they feel emotions such as joy, anger, fear, calm, sadness, or curiosity.



For students on the spectrum:

They can use ready-made
pictograms
(e.g., ● ● ●) instead of drawing.

GAME 2 “INSIDE OUT”

Reflection:

- Did anything surprise you about where you felt emotions?
- Have others made similar comments?”



Game Play (Continued)

3. Show Emotions Without Words

- Pick an emotion card.
- Show the emotion without words using gestures, movements, colors, facial expressions, or sounds.
- Your group tries to guess the emotion.

4. Emotional Blends (Optional Extension)

- After a few rounds, try showing two emotions at once (like joy + anxiety) to see how feelings can mix.

5. Class Reflection

- Possible questions:
 - *What was easy or hard about recognising emotions?*
 - *How did you feel when others tried to understand you?*
 - *Are emotions always easy to see?*
 - *How can you support someone whose emotions aren't obvious?*



GAME 2 “ INSIDE OUT ”

Tips for the Teacher:



- Create a safe atmosphere – don't force expression, allow for a variety of forms.
- Don't ask "**why** you feel this way," but rather "**how** you feel."
- Be careful not to judge the expression ("nicely displayed") – rather, "interesting that you see it that way."
- Students on the spectrum may need more time to process emotions or describe them

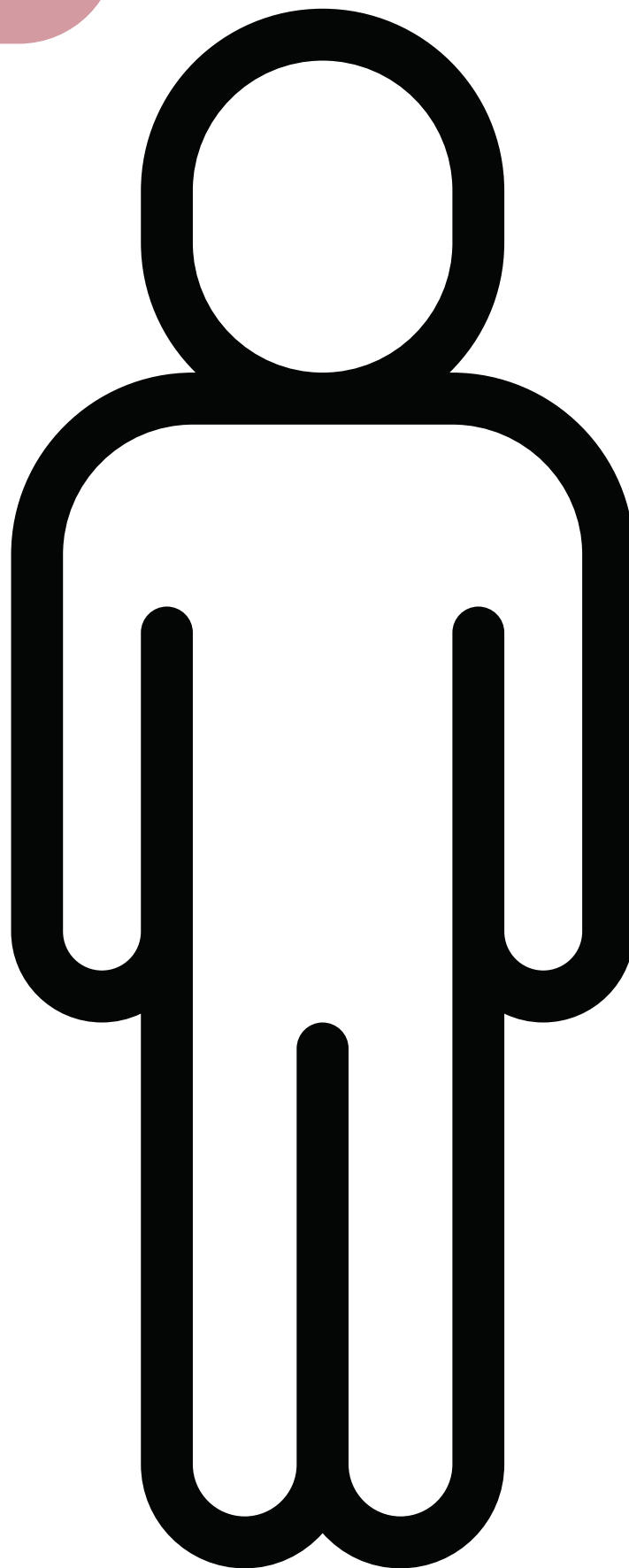
Educational Value of the Game:



The game demonstrates that emotions are universal, yet everyone experiences them differently. For neurotypical students, it's a lesson in empathy and understanding diverse forms of expression, for students on the spectrum, it's a safe space to experience and express emotions.

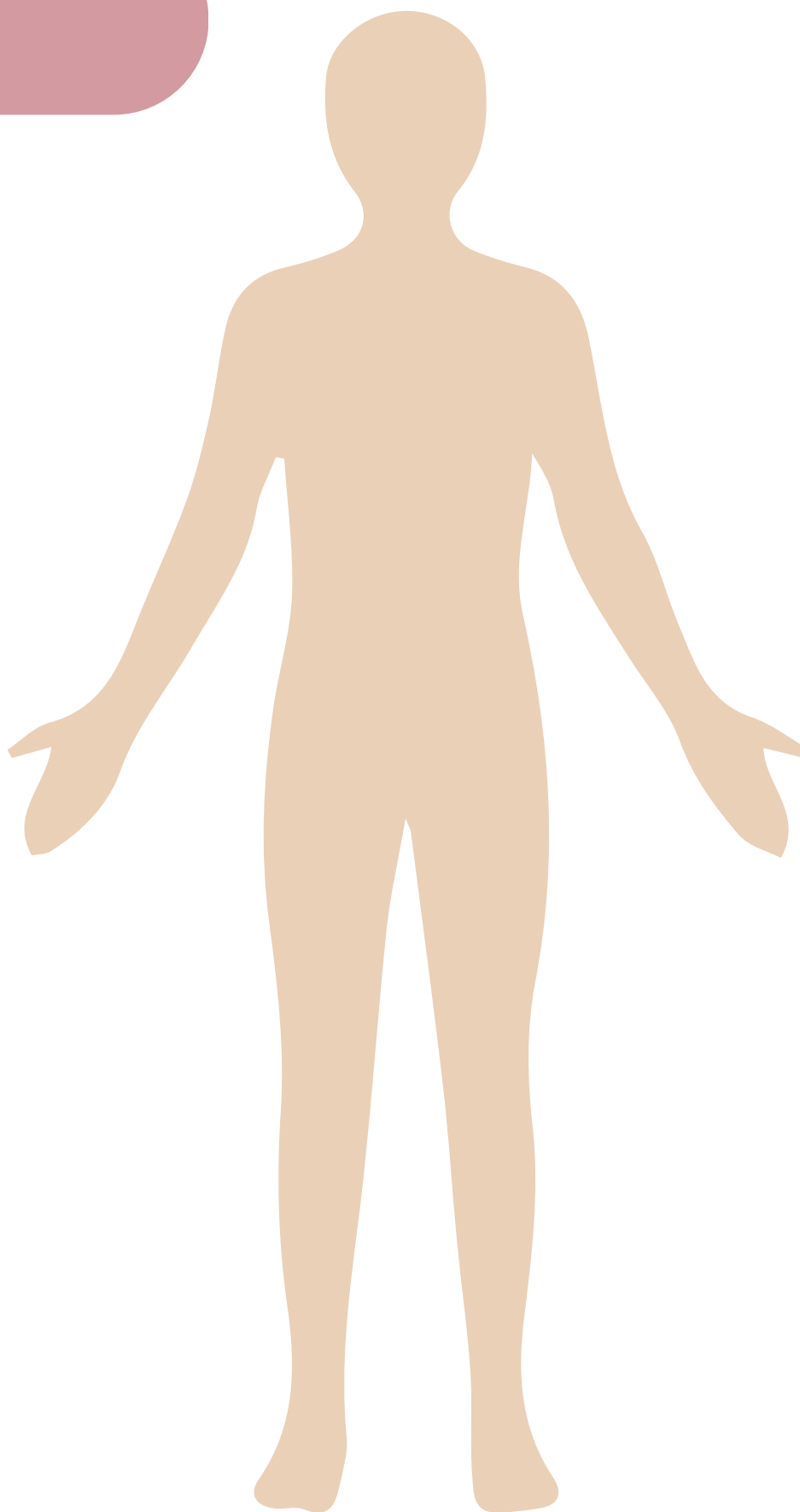
For everyone, it's a shared experience of mindfulness, communication, and mutual understanding.

Chapter 1



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Chapter 1



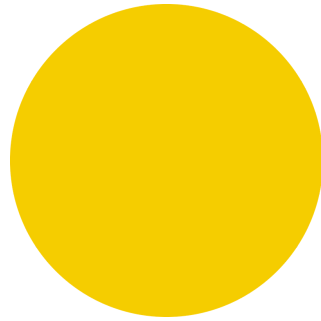
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RED CIRCLE



STRONG EMOTION
ANGER / STRESS

YELLOW
CIRCLE



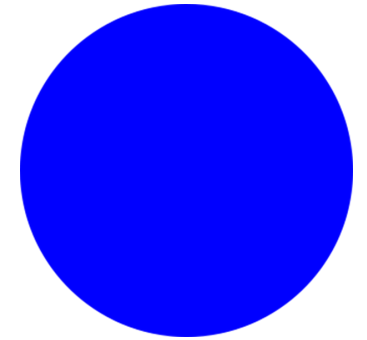
ENERGY /
CURIOSITY
STIMULATION

GREEN
CIRCLE



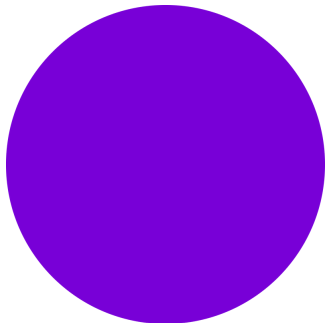
PEACE / COMFORT

BLUE CIRCLE



SADNESS /
WITHDRAWAL

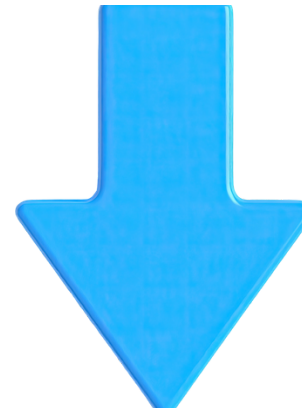
PURPLE CIRCLE



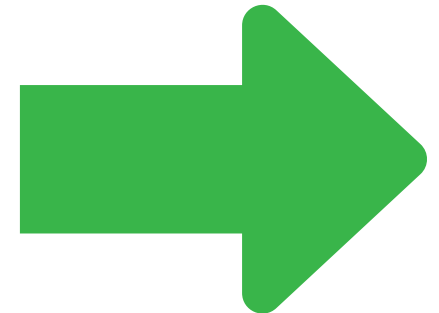
CONFUSION/
MIXED FEELINGS



STRONG
EMOTION



WEAK
EMOTION



MODERATE
EMOTION



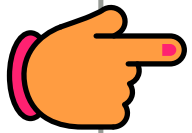




3-2-1 REFLECTION



List 3 things that you learned about Neurodiversity from this chapter.



Describe 2 ways you can assist a peer with the need identified
In this chapter?

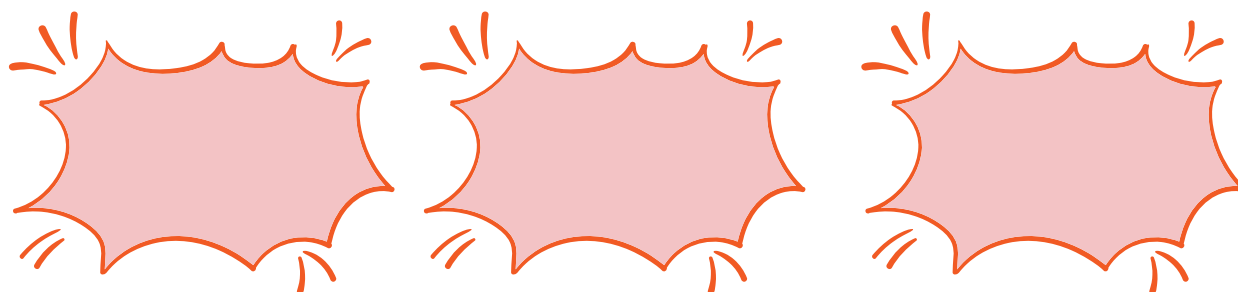


Identify one area you want to personally improve, specifically about including and supporting the need in this chapter.

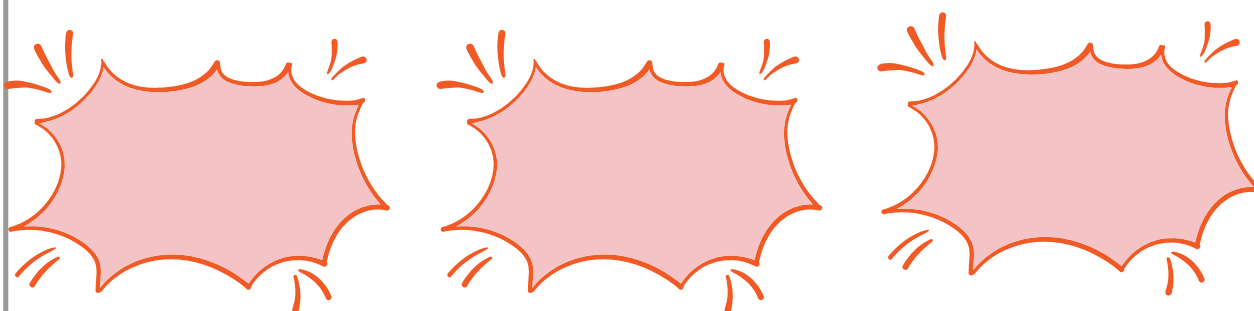


STUDENT CHALLENGE

Complete a Spider Diagram for the needs identified in this chapter



Autism

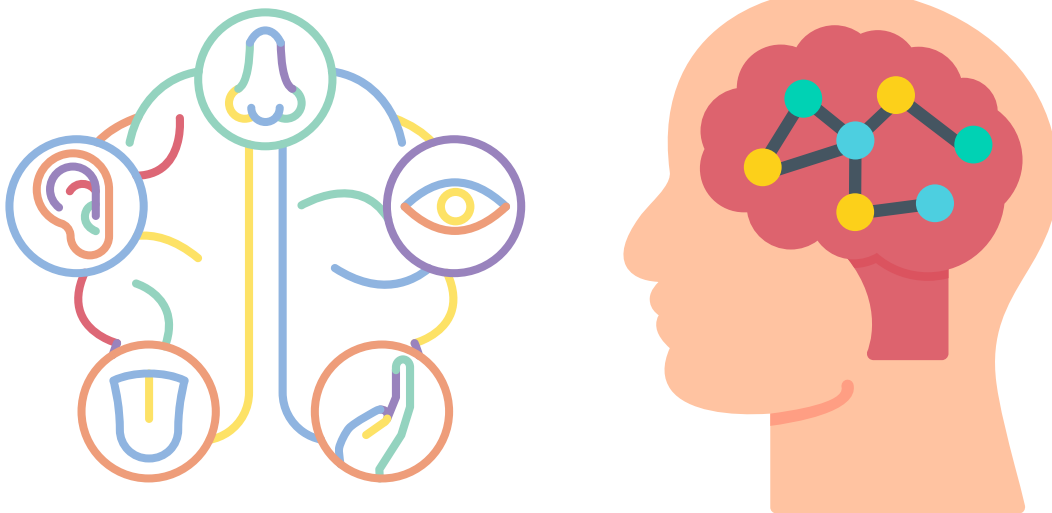






WHAT IS SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDER?

🧠 Each of us perceives the world through our senses – hearing, sight, touch, taste, smell, as well as balance and body sensation (proprioception). The brain typically integrates this information and helps us react – for example, to jump away from something hot approaching or to focus despite noise.



👉 In people with sensory processing disorder (SPD), the brain has difficulty correctly receiving or interpreting stimuli. This doesn't mean someone is "behaving badly" – their senses simply work differently.

What might this look like?

★ Each person with SPD may experience something different, but the most common symptoms include:

◆ Hypersensitivity (hyperreactivity)

Some stimuli are too strong: sounds seem too loud (e.g., a dryer, screaming, doorbell), lights are too bright, clothes are irritating or labels are irritating, crowds and noise cause fatigue or stress.

◆ Hyposensitivity (hyporeactivity)

Some stimuli are too weak, the person doesn't notice them: may like to hug tightly, swing, or jump, moves frequently, seeks movement or strong sensations, sometimes doesn't feel like they've hurt themselves or are hungry.



How can YOU recognize a peer with SPD?

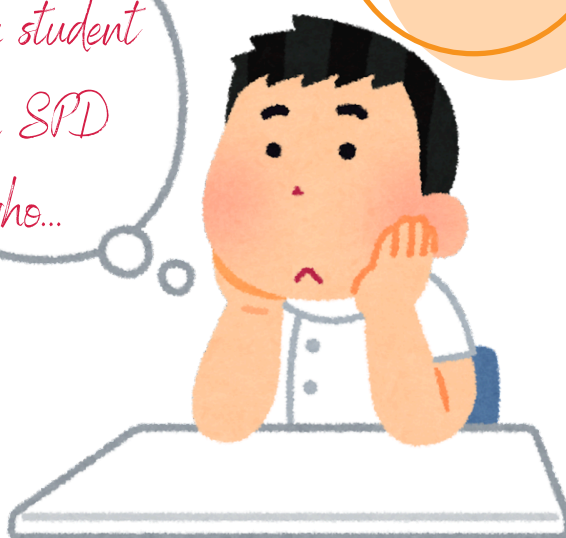
You can notice it if you see someone who...

*...avoids physical contact
(e.g., during play).*

*...has difficulty concentrating
in a noisy classroom.*

*...has difficulty handling certain sounds
(e.g., scratching chalk, a bell).*

*I'm a student
with SPD
who...*



...needs sensory breaks (e.g., a moment of movement, quiet, noise-cancelling headphones).

...gets tired or angry easily when there is too much stimulation.



What YOU can do?

As a student with SPD:

Speak openly
about what
bothers you
(e.g., noise, labels,
smells).

Find a moment
of movement.

Take advantage of
breaks and quiet
spaces.

Find things that
help you:
headphones,
chewing gum.

As a peer of someone with SPD:

Don't laugh if someone reacts
differently to sounds,
smells, or touch.

Remember that everyone
has different needs.

Help create a calmer
atmosphere.

Important!

*Sensory Processing Disorder
doesn't mean someone
is "weird" or "lazy."*

*SPD is simply a different way
of experiencing the world.*

*With support and understanding,
your peers with SPD can thrive
in school and beyond.*



GAME 1

“SENSOBEAR - A JOURNEY THROUGH A SENSORY WORLD”

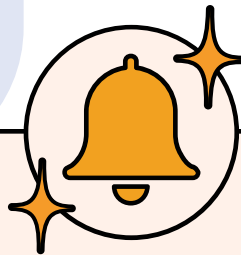
Participants

Age:
7-10 years

Number
of Players:
2-6

Game Time:
approx.
30-45
minutes

Location:
home,
school



The Purpose of this Game:

- Understand what Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD) is in a simple, clear way.
- Build empathy and learn how to accept and support others who experience the world differently.
- Learn about your own senses and what kinds of sensory input you like or dislike.
- Practice working together, communicating, and thinking about your experiences.

Game Description

Players go on an adventure with SensoBear — a friendly teddy who experiences sights, sounds, smells, movement, and touch in different ways. As you play, you’ll learn how people can sense the world differently. Your goal is to earn empathy points by helping characters, showing kindness, and understanding their challenges.

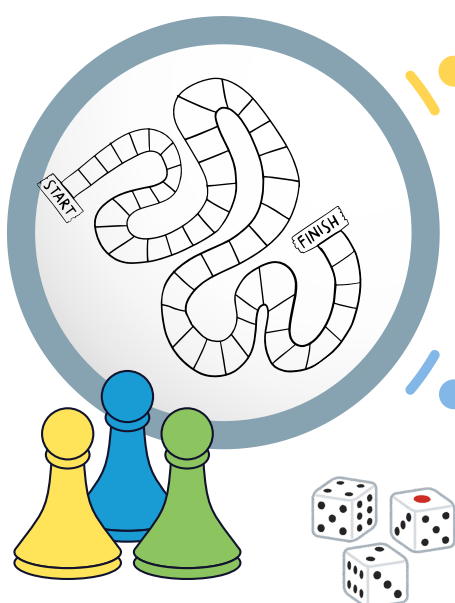




Game Contents

- **Gameboard:** 30-space path through different Sensory Worlds (Forest of Sounds, Valley of Touch, Land of Smells & Tastes, Island of Balance, Town of Tranquility).
- **Sense Cards (60):** 12 cards for each sense — Hearing, Sight, Touch, Balance, Smell/Taste.
- **Empathy Cards (30):** Rewards for helping, thinking, and supporting others.
- **Movement Challenge Cards (10):** Simple movement or sensory activities.
- **Pawns & Dice:** One pawn per player, and one dice.
- **Empathy Tokens:** Hearts, buttons, or paper circles to track point.

Preparation



1. Each player chooses a pawn and places it on the starting square.

2. Shuffle the deck of cards: "Sense Cards", "Empathy Cards", "Challenge Cards"

3. Place them separately next to the board.

Tips: All game materials can be prepared by teachers together with students.



Gameplay

- Players take turns rolling the dice and moving a pawn.
- Depending on the square they land on, they perform a specific action:

Field Type

Action

 **Sensory Field**
(e.g., Hearing, Sight)

Draw a Sense Card
and complete the task.

 **Movement
Challenge**

Draw a Challenge Card
and complete the exercise.

 **Helping
SensoBear**

Draw an Empathy Card and read
the situation– how you would help?

 **Special Field**

You may trade a Sense Card with
another player or pause for 1 turn.

- After completing a task, a player can earn:
1 empathy token for a correct or empathetic action,
2 tokens if they can also explain why the situation
was difficult for the person with SPD.
- The player with the most empathy tokens at the end
of the board wins.



Conclusion and reflection

At the end of the game, players count their tokens and answer the following questions together:

★ What did you learn about the senses?

★ What was the hardest thing for you?

★ How can you help someone who has difficulty with noise, touch, or light?

Each participant becomes a "Friend of SensoBear".





HEARING

Someone dropped a metal ruler. SensoBear covered his ears and hid under his desk.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Some people have hypersensitive hearing – sounds can be painful for them.

HEARING

Class is very noisy. Kids talk at the same time.

SensoBear looks overwhelmed.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Busy noise can overwhelm sensitive ears.

HEARING

A chair scrapes the floor loudly. SensoBear jumps.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Sudden sounds can feel scary.

HEARING

The music sounds fun to you. SensoBear looks worried.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Not everyone enjoys loud music.

HEARING

Someone bangs on a desk. SensoBear hides.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Sharp sounds can hurt sensitive hearing.

HEARING

The classroom fan is humming. SensoBear can't concentrate.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Soft background noise can be distracting.

HEARING

Fire drill sirens go off. SensoBear panics.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Some sounds feel dangerous to sensitive ears.

HEARING

Group work is loud. SensoBear covers his ears.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Too much noise can be overwhelming.

HEARING

A balloon pops. SensoBear cries.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Unexpected sounds can feel painful.

HEARING

The movie volume is high. SensoBear looks uncomfortable.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Noise tolerance is different for everyone.

HEARING

Students laugh loudly nearby. SensoBear moves away.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Even happy sounds can be too much.

HEARING

The classroom is echoing. SensoBear feels confused.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Too many sounds at once can overload the brain.



👁️ VISION

Fluorescent lights are flashing. SensoBear is squinting and can't eat his lunch.

👉 How can you help?

💡 Explanation:

The light might be too bright - you can sit further away or with the lights dimmed.

👁️ VISION

Bright lights shine overhead.

SensoBear squints.

👉 How can you help?

💡 Explanation:

Some eyes are sensitive to light - you can seat further away from light.

👁️ VISION

Flashing images on the screen. SensoBear feels dizzy.

👉 How can you help?

💡 Explanation:

Movement can overwhelm vision - you can calm him down by changing place.

👁️ VISION

The room feels cluttered. SensoBear looks lost.

👉 How can you help?

💡 Explanation:

Too many visuals can confuse the brain - try to limit visual images.

👁️ VISION

Sun reflects off the window. SensoBear covers his eyes.

👉 How can you help?

💡 Explanation:

Glare can feel painful - always cover windows and limit the ingress of bright light.

👁️ VISION

Bright colors all around. SensoBear seems tired.

👉 How can you help?

💡 Explanation:

Strong colors can overstimulate - limit bright, harsh colors in your environment.

👁️ VISION

The teacher changes slides quickly. SensoBear can't keep up.

👉 How can you help?

💡 Explanation:

Some brains process images slowly - ask the teacher to scroll through the slides more slowly.

👁️ VISION

Lights flicker overhead. SensoBear feels uneasy.

👉 How can you help?

💡 Explanation:

Flickering lights can bother sensitive vision - ask him to change seats or go to another room with him.

👁️ VISION

Crowded picture book. SensoBear looks confused.

👉 How can you help?

💡 Explanation:

Too many images at once can overwhelm - cover some of the text or pictures, or read the text aloud to him.

👁️ VISION

Reading small letters. SensoBear strains to see.

👉 How can you help?

💡 Explanation:

Visual processing can be challenging - help him with reading or give some tools to make letters bigger.

👁️ VISION

Bright toys flash. SensoBear avoids playing.

👉 How can you help?

💡 Explanation:

Some children need softer visuals - offer him toys in subdued colors.

👁️ VISION

Busy classroom walls. SensoBear looks overwhelmed.

👉 How can you help?

💡 Explanation:

Many details are hard to focus on - ask the teacher to change the room decoration.



TOUCH

SensoBear doesn't want to put on his sweater – he says it "bites."

How will you react?

◆ **Explanation:**
Some children feel fabrics more strongly – they may prefer soft, loose clothing.

TOUCH

New jacket feels itchy. SensoBear pulls it off.

How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**
Some fabrics hurt sensitive skin – you can report the situation to the teacher.

TOUCH

Play dough feels sticky. SensoBear avoids it.

How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**
Certain textures are uncomfortable – choose toys and learning aids with a delicate texture.

TOUCH

Someone tags SensoBear.

He jumps away.

How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**
Unexpected touch can feel scary – do not touch without prior notice.

TOUCH

Glue on fingers. SensoBear cries.

How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**
Sticky textures can cause distress – suggest him to wash his hands.

TOUCH

Sand on hands. SensoBear freezes.

How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**
Grainy textures may be overwhelming – support him by washing his hand.

TOUCH

Barefoot on grass. SensoBear pulls his feet back.

How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**
Foot sensitivity is common – support him by giving hand.

TOUCH

Bus seat fabric rubs. SensoBear shifts.

How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**
Some textures cause discomfort – suggest a standing position in the bus.

TOUCH

Hug surprise. SensoBear stiffens.

How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**
Sudden touch can trigger stress – never do it by surprise.

TOUCH

Warm water on hands. SensoBear jerks away.

How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**
Temperature changes may be overwhelming – always control the temperature of water.

TOUCH

Tag in shirt scratches. SensoBear can't relax.

How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**
Small sensations can feel big – always remember about that and propose relaxing tools to minimize the stress.

TOUCH

Messy fingers during art. SensoBear stops painting.

How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**
Some kids avoid messy play – suggest organizing the space and reducing table clutter, remember about washing hands.

Chapter 2



Sense Cards

BALANCE



BALANCE

SensoBear is squirming in his chair, and the teacher tells him to stop.

👉 How can you help him concentrate without squirming?

◆ **Explanation:**

Some people need exercise to calm down - you can give them a stress ball.

BALANCE

During PE lesson you have to walk on a line. SensoBear wobbles.

👉 How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**

Balance takes practice - take his hand to help him to keep a balance.

BALANCE

Spinning game.

SensoBear becomes dizzy.

👉 How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**

Movement can overwhelm the body.

BALANCE

Jumping rope.

SensoBear struggles.

👉 How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**

Coordination can be hard - encourage him to take up this activity.

BALANCE

Stairs feel scary. SensoBear holds the railing.

👉 How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**

Feeling unsteady causes fear - be careful and walk on stairs together with him.

BALANCE

Running game.

SensoBear falls behind.

👉 How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**

Movement processing varies - help him run by adjusting the pace to his abilities.

BALANCE

Balance beam wobble.

SensoBear pauses.

👉 How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**

Some bodies need extra support - help him to keep coordination and balance.

BALANCE

Ball throwing.

SensoBear misses catches.

👉 How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**

Hand-eye coordination is tricky - reduce the distance and the target will be easier.

BALANCE

Standing on one foot. SensoBear quickly falls.

👉 How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**

Balance muscles may be weaker - you have to encourage him to train.

BALANCE

Twirling fast.

SensoBear gets sick.

👉 How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**

Spinning overloads balance senses - perform the exercises more slowly while maintaining balance.

BALANCE

Dancing game.

SensoBear feels lost.

👉 How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**

Moving patterns confuse the brain - use visual mats with marked steps to perform..

BALANCE

Obstacle course.

SensoBear hesitates.

👉 How can you help?

◆ **Explanation:**

Body awareness can be shaky - don't force tasks if you find them too difficult.



Chapter 2



Sense Cards

SMELL & TASTE



TASTE & SMELL

Strong perfume nearby.
SensioBear wrinkles his nose.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Strong smells cause discomfort.

TASTE & SMELL

Lunch smells mix together.
SensioBear avoids eating.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Different smells can overwhelm senses.

TASTE & SMELL

Someone opens citrus fruit.
SensioBear looks dizzy.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Some smells trigger headaches.

TASTE & SMELL

Paint smells strong.
SensioBear moves away.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Chemical odors can be overwhelming.

TASTE & SMELL

Trying new food.
SensioBear resists.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Some kids struggle with new tastes.

TASTE & SMELL

Cafeteria smells loud. SensioBear feels sick.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Strong odors overload the brain.

TASTE & SMELL

Trash can nearby.
SensioBear covers nose.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Certain smells are unbearable.

TASTE & SMELL

Birthday cake smells strong.
SensioBear steps back.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Even sweet smells can overwhelm.

TASTE & SMELL

Lunch smells strange.

SensioBear refuses to eat.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Smells affect appetite.

TASTE & SMELL

Soap smells intense.
SensioBear won't wash hands.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Perfumes can feel too strong.

TASTE & SMELL

New gym smell.
SensioBear feels uneasy.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

New smells cause anxiety.

TASTE & SMELL

Trying a new snack.
SensioBear hesitates.

👉 How can you help?

◆ Explanation:

Taste sensitivity is common.





You help others understand that SensoBear isn't being rude, he's just having trouble with noise.
→ +1 empathy point



You notice your friend covering his ears when the bell rings. You suggest going out into the hall with him a moment later. → +2 empathy points



You notice your friend getting tired during handwriting tasks because writing is difficult for him. You suggest taking short breaks and offer to help with note-taking.
→ +3 empathy points



You see a classmate struggling to stay seated because her body needs more movement. You politely move your chair to give her extra space. → +2 empathy points



You notice your friend wincing when touching certain classroom materials (like glue or paint). You help him find tools or gloves to avoid direct contact.
→ +3 empathy points



You see a classmate having trouble tying their shoelaces before recess. You kneel down and calmly help without rushing them. → +2 empathy points



You notice your friend becoming overwhelmed by bright classroom lights. You suggest sitting in a dimmer area or asking the teacher to lower the lights.
→ +3 empathy points



You see a classmate struggling to keep up during a fast walking activity because of coordination challenges. You slow your pace and walk beside her.
→ +2 empathy points



You notice your friend struggling to button his jacket because of poor fine-motor control. You patiently offer to help him.
→ +2 empathy points



You see a classmate covering her ears when the room becomes loud. You suggest moving to a quieter place together. → +2 empathy points

Empathy Cards



You notice your friend avoiding messy sensory activities (like finger painting). You support their choice and help them use a brush or sponge instead. → +3 empathy points



You see a classmate having difficulty carrying a heavy backpack due to low muscle strength. You offer to help carry part of the load. → +2 empathy points



You notice that your friend with SPD looks sad during the break. You approach her and ask if you want to sit with him/her. → +2 empathy points



You see that your friend with SPD was omitted from the team selection. You propose that he join your team. → +2 empathy points



You see a classmate struggling to open their lunch container because of weak grip strength. You offer to open it for them. → +2 empathy points



You hear someone with SPD makes a mistake in their answer and are being ridiculed. You defend them and change the conversation. → +3 empathy points



You see that your friend doesn't understand his homework. You offer help after class. → +2 empathy points



You notice that your friend is sitting alone in the cafeteria. You invite her to sit at your table. → +2 empathy points



You notice your friend fidgeting and rocking in their seat to stay regulated. You respect their need to move and help explain to others that it helps them focus. → +3 empathy points



You notice your classmate looking stressed because he lost his notebook. You lend him yours so he can copy the notes. → +2 empathy points



You see your friend hesitating to speak in class.
You smile and nod to encourage him/her to share
the answer. → +2 empathy points



You hear someone being teased for their sensory problem.
You speak up and say that everyone talks differently
and that's okay. → +3 empathy points



You notice a student sitting alone on a field trip.
You sit next to him and start a friendly conversation.
→ +2 empathy points



You see a classmate crying in the locker room.
You hand her a tissue and gently ask if she wants
to talk. → +3 empathy points



A student with SPD looks lost at school.
You offer to help him walking around .
→ +3 empathy points



You notice your mate with SPD doesn't have anyone to work
with for a pair activity. You invite him/her to work with you.
→ +2 empathy points



You notice your friend having trouble cutting paper during
art class. You offer to help cut or hold the paper steady
for him. → +2 empathy points



You see a classmate getting overwhelmed in a crowded
hallway and moving very slowly. You wait and walk
beside her so she doesn't feel rushed. → +3 empathy
points



You notice your friend dropping his pencil several
times due to coordination difficulties. You calmly pick
it up for him without making a big deal out of it.
→ +2 empathy points



You see a classmate avoiding group ga
mes because balancing and catching are hard for him.
You invite him to join a modified or slower-paced game.
→ +3 empathy points

Challenge Movements Cards



Spin around 3 times and then try to walk straight.



Walk slowly while carrying a book on your head.



Hop on one foot across the room.



Jump in place 10 times, keeping your arms at your sides.



Walk heel-to-toe across the room.



March in place and clap your hands above your head every 3 steps.



Try drawing something with a blindfold on – how did you do?



Try walking a line with your eyes closed. Balance on one leg for 10 seconds.



Reach up high and then touch your toes 10 times.



Walk while tapping your right hand to your left knee, then switch sides.



SENSOBEAR

A journey through a sensory world

START



Island of Balance



Forest of Sounds



Town of Tranquility



Land of
Smells & Tastes



Valley of Touch



FINISH



GAME 2 “SENSORY MISSION”

Participants:

Objectives: *Students learn how people can perceive sensory stimuli differently (touch, sound, light, smell, movement), how to communicate with people who have sensory difficulties, how to support and understand others when their reactions differ from "typical."*

Age:

8-12 years

Number of Players:

6-12 (in pairs
or small groups)

Materials needed:

blindfolds or sunglasses, boxes of various tactile materials, task cards, pens and notepads, timer or sand timer.

Game Time:

approx. 30-40
minutes

Game Description

Players take on the role of "sensory explorers" who must complete a series of communication tasks - each simulating a different type of sensory challenge. The goal is to complete the mission while maintaining good cooperation and empathy. During the game, the leader acts as a moderator, guiding groups or pairs of participants through the tasks.



GAME 2 SENSORY MISSION

Game stages

◆ 1. Mission "Echo"

Objective: Understanding the difficulty of focusing in a noisy environment.



→ One player in pair or group attempts to tell a short story (e.g., what they did this weekend), while the other players create artificial noise - tapping the table, rustling paper, or talking quietly.

→ After 1 minute, they discuss what was difficult and how they can help someone who has trouble processing sounds (e.g., speaking slower, repeating, ensuring silence).

◆ 2. Mission "Light Maze"

Objective: Understanding photosensitivity.



→ One person is blindfolded or wearing sunglasses. Another person guides them by voice along a straight path (e.g., between chairs).

→ Discussion: How did it feel to rely on others? How can you help someone who has trouble with light?

GAME 2 SENSORY MISSION

◆ 3. Mission "Touch Chaos"

Objective: Understand the aversion to touching certain materials.

→ Boxes or bags contain various materials (e.g., cotton wool, sandpaper, bubble wrap, rice). Players touch them with their eyes closed and describe their sensations.

→ Discussion: Which ones were pleasant and which ones were not? Did everyone experience the same sensation?

◆ 4. Mission "Silent Conversation"

Objective: Practicing nonverbal communication.

→ Players attempt to convey a message (e.g., "I'm hungry," "Let's go for a walk") without using words.

→ Discussion: How can you understand someone who doesn't speak or has difficulty expressing themselves verbally?





GAME 2 SENSORY MISSION

Game Ending

◆ After completing all missions, players collaborate to create the **"Empathetic Communicator Code"** - rules that help communicate with people who experience sensory difficulties.



*"Not everyone likes loud noises
- ask before you play music."
"If someone needs silence, it doesn't mean
they don't like others."
"Everyone has the right to sensory comfort."*

Remember!

Encourage others to be empathetic, not judgmental during the playwork.

After each mission, hold a mini reflection session:
"How did you feel?", "What was difficult?", "How would you help someone in this situation?"

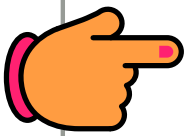




3-2-1 REFLECTION



List 3 things that you learned about Neurodiversity from this chapter.



Describe 2 ways you can assist a peer with the need identified in this chapter?

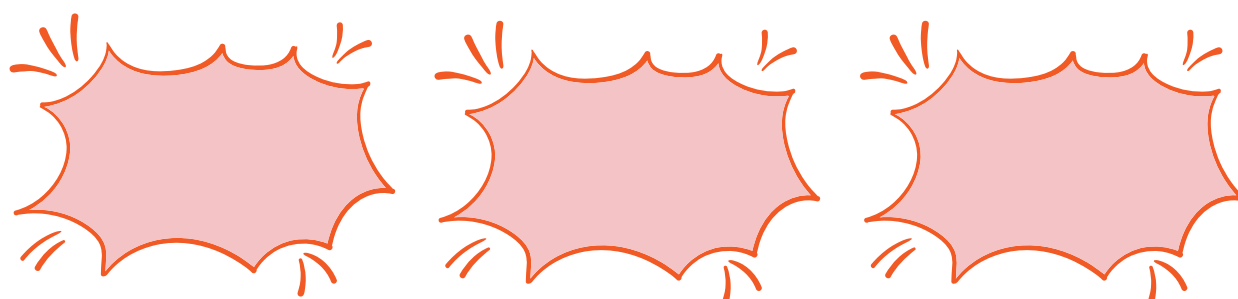


Identify one area you want to personally improve, specifically about including and supporting the need in this chapter.

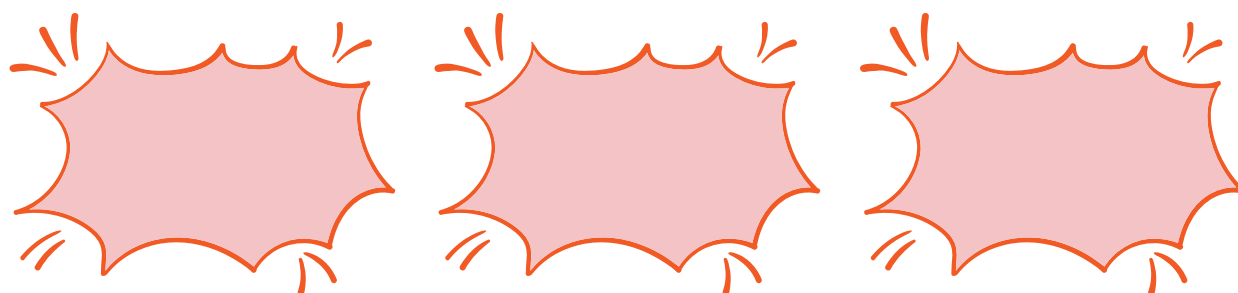


STUDENT CHALLENGE

**Complete a Spider Diagram
for the needs
identified in this chapter**



**Sensory Processing
Disorder
SPD**





CHAPTER 3

SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTY



DiverseMind

WHAT MIGHT SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTY LOOK LIKE?

What is SLD and What does SLD look like ?

- SLD stands for Specific Learning Difficulty.
- It means that some people's brains work in their own unique way when it comes to thinking, learning, remembering, or understanding.
- Having an SLD doesn't mean someone isn't smart- it just means they might learn differently.

They might need things like:

- ✨ Extra time
- 🧩 Helpful tools
- 🔧 Different strategies
- 💬 A bit of extra support

And that's totally okay - different doesn't mean less.
Everyone learns in their own way, and that way matters.

How to Recognize SLD in a Friend or Peer

- 📖 They might take a little longer to **read** or **write** than others.
- 🔤 Sometimes they get **mixed up** with **letters, numbers, or directions**.
- 🗣️ They might **mix up sounds** or **words** when reading or speaking.
- ✍️ **Spelling** and **grammar** can be a bit tricky for them.
- ➗ Maths might feel hard - like **remembering steps** or **solving problems**.
- 📖 They might **avoid reading out loud** because it feels tough.
- 🧠 Sometimes they **forget instructions** or feel **overwhelmed** by too much information.
- 😞 They might feel **frustrated** or **upset** when schoolwork feels hard.

WHAT MIGHT SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTY LOOK LIKE?

How You Can Help a Friend with SLD:

I can let my friend pick the part of the group work that suits their strengths best.

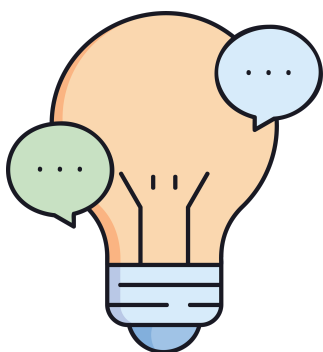
I know my friend can do amazing things- they just might do them in their own way.

I'll try to be patient and kind because everyone learns differently.

I can help by reading the instructions out loud or explaining them clearly

I can offer to study or work with them so we can learn together

Offer to study or work together.



I'll celebrate their strengths and cheer them on when they do well

THE CHALLENGES OF HAVING SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTY IN SCHOOL

Dyslexia: Reading and Writing Differences

Some students with **dyslexia** might:

-  Find it hard to **organise ideas, spell, or remember facts.**
-  Need schoolwork that uses more **pictures and less text.**
-  Feel **shy about reading out loud** or showing their written work.



Dyscalculia: Maths Differences

Some students with **dyscalculia** might:

-  **Find maths tricky**, like adding, subtracting, or working with numbers.
-  Have trouble **telling time** or **working out change.**
-  Struggle to **remember multiplication tables** or understand maths steps.
-  Feel **worried about sharing work** or asking questions.

Dyspraxia (DCD): Coordination Differences

Some students with **dyspraxia** might:

-  Find **PE, sports, handwriting, or getting around school** tough.
-  Have difficulty with **balance or coordination.**
-  Get **tired faster** or find **keeping organised** hard.
-  Feel **frustrated or embarrassed** if things take longer.



Dysgraphia: Writing Differences

Some students with **dysgraphia** might:

-  **Write slowly** or find **spelling and punctuation** tricky.
-  Have great ideas but find it hard to **get them onto the page.**
-  Feel nervous about **showing written work** to others.





PRACTICAL TIPS FOR WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTY

Your Learning Toolkit: How to Get Help and Help Others

Why We Made This Toolkit 💡

Everyone learns in their own way- and that's completely okay!

Having an SLD (Specific Learning Difficulty) doesn't mean someone isn't smart.

It just means their brain learns a little differently and that difference matters.

Sometimes you might need:

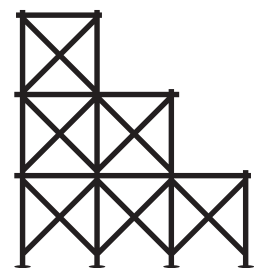
- 🕒 Extra time to finish work
- 👉 Support from a teacher or classmate
- 🖼️ Visuals or learning tools to help things make sense
- 🗣️ Instructions read out loud or a different way to show what they know

These supports help everyone learn in the way that works best for them. **It's all about focusing on strengths, not struggles!** 💪

🌱 Tool 1: Scaffolding – The Right Help at the Right Time

Scaffolding means getting just the right amount of help, not too much and not too little. 🏗️

Think of it like building a tower: you start with support, and as you get stronger, the support slowly comes away.



💡 *Vygotsky's Tip:*

Your “learning sweet spot” is when you can't do something on your own yet, but you can do it with a little help. That's when real learning happens!



PRACTICAL TIPS FOR WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTY

Your Learning Toolkit: How to Get Help and Help Others

TOOL 2: Inclusive and Caring Learning Everyone Belongs

In a caring, nurturing classroom, everyone feels welcome and supported. No one is left out or forgotten.

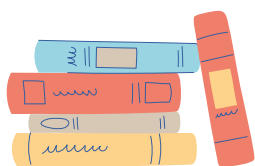
What this looks like:

- Everyone is welcome no matter what.
- We all learn in different ways.
- It's okay to get extra help when you need it.
- Be kind and respectful no bullying or meanness.
- Fair means everyone gets what *they* need to succeed.



TOOL 3: Personalized Learning Tools

Find the way that works best for you to learn!



What this looks like:

- **Learn by Listening (Auditory)**
 - You remember things better when you hear them like listening to audiobooks, podcasts, or someone explaining.
- **Learn by Seeing (Visual)**
 - You understand better when you see pictures, videos, charts, or diagrams.
- **Learn by Doing (Kinaesthetic)**
 - You learn best when you move, touch, or do hands-on activities, like building, acting, or experimenting.





PRACTICAL TIPS FOR WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTY

Your Learning Toolkit: How to Get Help and Help Others

TOOL 4: Mind & Body Tools

Taking care of your feelings helps you learn better.

- Use a calm-down spot or a fidget toy when you feel stressed.
- Say helpful phrases to yourself like “I can do this” or “I can ask for help.”
- Use timers or schedules to stay on track.
- Celebrate small wins—they build confidence!



TOOL 5: Tools for Reading & Writing

These tools help you show what you really know!

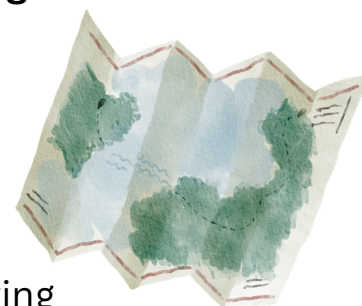
- Listen to audiobooks or use text-to-speech to hear the words.
- Try speech-to-text—talk, and it types!
- Use spell check or apps that predict words.
- Use writing frames or sentence starters to help you get started.



TOOL 6: Apply What You Learn – Take Learning Outside the Classroom!

Learning doesn't stop in school—you can use it anywhere!

- See how your learning connects to real life.
- Practise skills in fun, new ways.
- Understand more by doing, exploring, and trying things out.





PRACTICAL TIPS FOR WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTY

Ways to Learn Outside the Classroom

- **Go on Field Trips:** Visit museums, farms, parks, or local shops to see and learn new things.
- **Do Community Projects:** Help plant a garden, clean up a park, or volunteer it's a great way to practice teamwork and responsibility.
- **Explore Nature:** Use science skills to observe plants, animals, or the weather around you.
- **Use Everyday Math:** Help measure ingredients while cooking or figure out change when shopping.
- **Write About Your Experiences:** Keep a journal or blog about what you see and learn outside.
- **Talk with People:** Interview family or neighbours about their jobs or hobbies.



Remember:

We all learn in different ways.

When we help each other, no one gets left behind.

We learn together, grow together, and succeed together.



GAME 1: “MATCH THE MIND”

Participants

Age: 12-18 years

Number of Players: 2-6

Game Time: approx. 30-45 minutes

Location: school, after-school club, team-building activities

Game Contents

- 10 Learning Hero Cards (2 of each type, showing how people learn differently)
- Example:  Leo the Listener,  Mia the Maker etc.
- 10 Question Cards with pictures and prompts to help your group talk

The Purpose of This Game?

Everyone's brain works in its own special way. In this game, you'll meet different "Learning Heroes": each one learns in a different way (like listening, moving, or drawing).

Your job is to work as a team to find matching learners and talk about how to include everyone in learning.

You'll discover that there's no one right way to learn- and every brain is amazing in its own way!





GAME 1: MATCH THE MIND

✚ Preparation

1. Shuffle the Learning Hero Cards and lay them face down in rows on the table or floor.
2. Place the Question Cards in a small pile nearby.
3. Make sure everyone knows the rule: Take turns, talk kindly, and have fun!

🎮 Game Play

1. On your turn, flip over two Learning Hero Cards.
2. If they match (same colour or symbol), your team keeps the pair.
3. Then, draw a Question Card and read it out loud (or have the teacher read it).
4. As a team, talk about the question for 1–2 minutes.
5. After your discussion were everyone gets involved, your team earns a discssion card.
6. If the cards don't match, turn them back over and let the next player go.
7. Keep playing until all the matches are found!

🏆 How to Win

Everyone wins when all the pairs are matched.

- 👉 The team with the most discussion cards at the end is crowned the Inclusion Champions! 🏅



MATCH THE MIND



In this game, you'll work together to match learning styles with the best ways to support different types of learners.

HOW TO PLAY

1. Work in small groups (3–5 players).
2. Lay out all Learning Hero and Support Strategy cards face down.
3. Turn over two cards: try to match the learner with the right strategy.
4. When you find a match, pick a Question Card and discuss it together.
5. Keep matching until all pairs are found!

💡 **Bonus:** Create your own Learning Hero with a unique learning style.

QUESTION CARD

HOW COULD YOU INCLUDE THIS TYPE OF LEARNER IN YOUR GROUP?

QUESTION CARD

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM CLASSMATES WHO SEE THINGS DIFFERENTLY?

QUESTION CARD

HOW CAN DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES HELP EACH OTHER IN TEAMWORK?

QUESTION CARD

HOW COULD TECHNOLOGY HELP SOMEONE WHO STRUGGLES WITH READING OR WRITING?

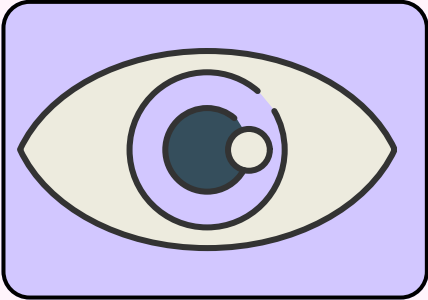
QUESTION CARD

THINK OF A TIME YOU FOUND SOMETHING EASY THAT SOMEONE ELSE FOUND HARD — WHAT DID YOU DO?

QUESTION CARD

HOW COULD YOU SHOW KINDNESS OR PATIENCE TO SOMEONE WHO LEARNS DIFFERENTLY FROM YOU?

VISIONARY VIOLET



 SEES THE WORLD IN
PICTURES!

LIKES DIAGRAMS,
COLOURS, AND VIDEOS.

ECHO ETHAN



 LEARNS BEST BY
HEARING AND SPEAKING.

ENJOYS DISCUSSIONS,
PODCASTS, AND REPEATING
INFORMATION ALOUD.

MOVE-IT MIA



 LEARNS BY DOING AND
MOVING.

NEEDS HANDS-ON
ACTIVITIES, EXPERIMENTS,
AND ROLE-PLAYS.

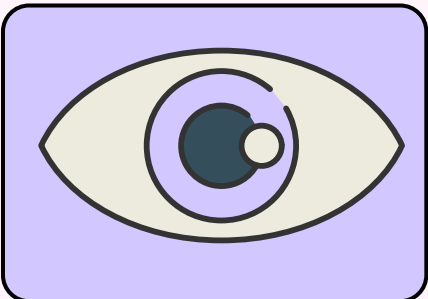
TALK-IT TOBY



 LOVES WORDS AND
LANGUAGE.

ENJOYS READING, WRITING,
STORYTELLING, AND
DISCUSSIONS.

VISUAL LEARNER



 USE VISUAL
SUPPORTS

 ADD DIAGRAMS,
CHARTS, AND COLOUR
CODES.

AUDITORY LEARNER



 TALK IT OUT

 USE GROUP
DISCUSSIONS, READING
ALoud, OR EXPLAINING
IDEAS.

KINAESTHETIC LEARNER



 HANDS-ON LEARNING

 TRY EXPERIMENTS,
BUILDING MODELS, OR
ACTING OUT SITUATIONS.

VERBAL LEARNER



 WORD POWER

 USE READING,
JOURNALING, AND
PRESENTATIONS TO
SHARE IDEAS.

TECHY TAYLOR



 THRIVES USING
DIGITAL TOOLS.

LEARNS WELL WITH APPS,
VIDEOS, VOICE NOTES, AND
ONLINE QUIZZES.

QUIET QUINN



 LEARNS BEST ALONE IN A
CALM SPACE.

PREFERS QUIET REFLECTION,
JOURNALING, AND WORKING
INDEPENDENTLY.

CREATE YOUR OWN!



CREATE YOUR OWN!



TECHNOLOGY- ASSISTED LEARNERS



 USE TECH TOOLS

 LEARN WITH VIDEOS,
EDUCATIONAL GAMES, OR
ASSISTIVE APPS.

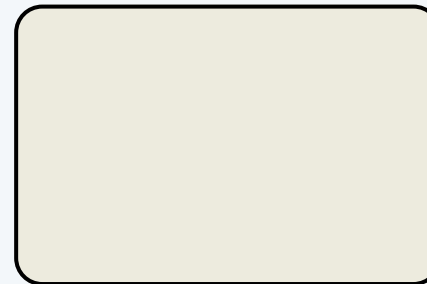
SOLITARY LEARNER



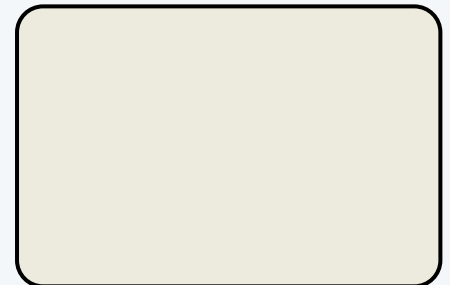
 QUIET TIME AND
REFLECTION

 GIVE THINKING TIME,
PERSONAL SPACE, OR
INDEPENDENT TASKS.

CREATE YOUR OWN!



CREATE YOUR OWN!





GAME 2: THE LEARNING LADDER

Participants

Age: 12-18 years

Number of Players: 2-6

Game Time: approx. 45 minutes -1 hour

Location: school, after-school club, team-building activities

Game Contents

- 1 Learning Ladder game board
- 1 dice
- Player tokens (1 per student or team)
- Obstacle cards (red)
- Support cards (green)

The Purpose of This Game?

In this game, you'll get to experience what learning can feel like for students with different challenges. You'll see how the right tools and support make learning easier for everyone. As you play, you'll practise empathy, learn how to be a supportive teammate, and explore simple ways to make your classroom more inclusive and welcoming for all.





GAME 2: THE LEARNING LADDER

Preparation

1. Lay out the Learning Ladder board on a table or flat surface where everyone can reach.
2. Shuffle the red Obstacle cards and green Support cards into two separate piles and place them face down beside the board.
3. Each player or team picks a token and places it on the START space.

Game Play

1. Players take turns rolling the dice and moving their token forward.
2. If you land on a neutral space, nothing happens – wait for your next turn.
1. If you land on an Obstacle space, pick up a red card and read it aloud. Follow the instructions.
2. If you land on a Support space, pick up a green card and read it aloud. Follow the instructions.
3. Everyone listens and supports each other during challenges.

How to Win

The first player or team to reach the final space on the board wins!



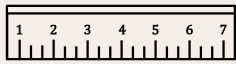
THE LEARNING LADDER

100	99	98		96	95	94	93	92	91
81		83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
80	79	78	77	76	75		73	72	71
61	62	63	64	65	66	67		69	70
60	59		57	56	55	54	53	52	51
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48		50
40	39	38	37		35	34	33	32	31
21	22	23	24	25	26		28	29	30
20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	
1	2	3		5	6	7	8	9	10

THE LEARNING LADDER

Game 2:

SUPPORT



YOU USE A RULER OR FINGER TO FOLLOW THE LINE. TRY READING ONE SHORT SENTENCE USING IT.

MOVE FORWARD 2..

THE LEARNING LADDER

SUPPORT



THE TEACHER GIVES SHORT BREAKS. YOU STRETCH YOUR HANDS FOR 10 SECONDS.

MOVE FORWARD 1.

THE LEARNING LADDER

SUPPORT



YOU USE VOICE-TO-TEXT TO WRITE YOUR ANSWERS.

MOVE FORWARD 3.

THE LEARNING LADDER

SUPPORT

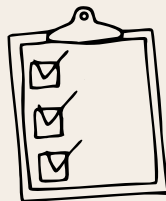


YOU AND A FRIEND HELP EACH OTHER WHEN STUCK.

MOVE FORWARD 2.

THE LEARNING LADDER

SUPPORT



YOU USE A CHECKLIST TO STAY ORGANISED.

MOVE FORWARD 2.

THE LEARNING LADDER

SUPPORT

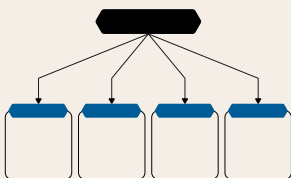


YOU USE A LAPTOP FOR WRITTEN TASKS.

MOVE FORWARD 3.

THE LEARNING LADDER

SUPPORT

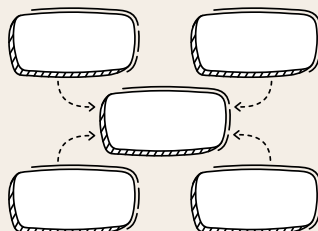


THE TEACHER USES PICTURES AND DIAGRAMS TO EXPLAIN..

MOVE FORWARD 3.

THE LEARNING LADDER

SUPPORT



YOU USE A MIND MAP TO PLAN IDEAS.

MOVE FORWARD 2.

THE LEARNING LADDER

SUPPORT



The Learning Ladder

YOU USE COLOURED HIGHLIGHTERS FOR KEY WORDS.

MOVE FORWARD 2.

THE LEARNING LADDER

Game 2:

OBSTACLE

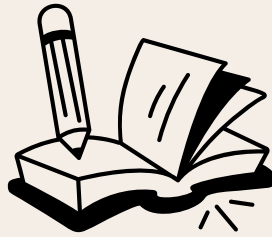


YOU CAN'T COPY
FROM THE BOARD
FAST ENOUGH..

MISS ONE TURN.

THE LEARNING LADDER

OBSTACLE



YOU FORGET HOMEWORK
EVEN THOUGH YOU
TRIED HARD.

MOVE BACK 2.

THE LEARNING LADDER

OBSTACLE



YOU LOSE FOCUS
BECAUSE THE ROOM IS
NOISY.

MOVE BACK 3.

THE LEARNING LADDER

OBSTACLE

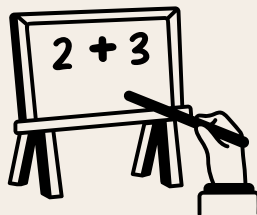


YOU FORGET WHAT
THE TEACHER SAID
AFTER A LONG
EXPLANATION.

MOVE BACK 2.

THE LEARNING LADDER

OBSTACLE

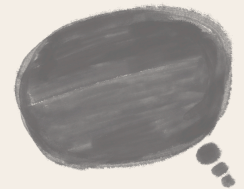


YOU MIX UP
NUMBERS IN MATHS
PROBLEMS.

MOVE BACK 2.

THE LEARNING LADDER

OBSTACLE



CAN YOU FIX THIS
SENTENCE? "SHCOOL
SI A PLCAE OT
LREAN ADN GRAW."

MOVE BACK 1.

THE LEARNING LADDER

OBSTACLE



TRY TO READ: "I LKIE
TO RAED ADN LREAN."

MOVE BACK 1.

THE LEARNING LADDER

OBSTACLE



TRY THIS TONGUE
TWISTER: "RED LORRY,
YELLOW LORRY, RED
LORRY, YELLOW LORRY."
(SAY IT 3 TIMES!)

MOVE BACK 2.

THE LEARNING LADDER

OBSTACLE



The Learning Ladder
READ THIS SILLY ONE
FAST: "SIX SLIPPERY
SNAILS SLID
SILENTLY SOUTH."

MOVE BACK 1.

THE LEARNING LADDER



REFLECTION

1. Think about your lessons.

Which topics / subjects do you find easy?



Which topics / subjects do you find more challenging?

Share these with a partner/group - what are the differences you notice?

2. You have learned about dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia (DCD) and dysgraphia in this chapter.

Write a line / draw a picture / act out a scene to represent each one to show your understanding.



REFLECTION

3. Read the scenarios below and fill in the blanks suggesting how you could work with your classmate. One example has already been completed for you.

Example:

a. **Dyslexia** - You are correcting each others written work.

Your classmate might feel... a little nervous about spelling errors.

You could... ask them to read their work to you quietly and give feedback that way.

b. **Dyscalculia** - The teacher is discussing fractions.

Your classmate might feel...

You could...

c. **Dyspraxia** - Your classmate has lost their timetable.

Your classmate might feel...

You could...

d. **Dysgraphia** - The class is summarising a chapter.

Your classmate might feel...

You could...

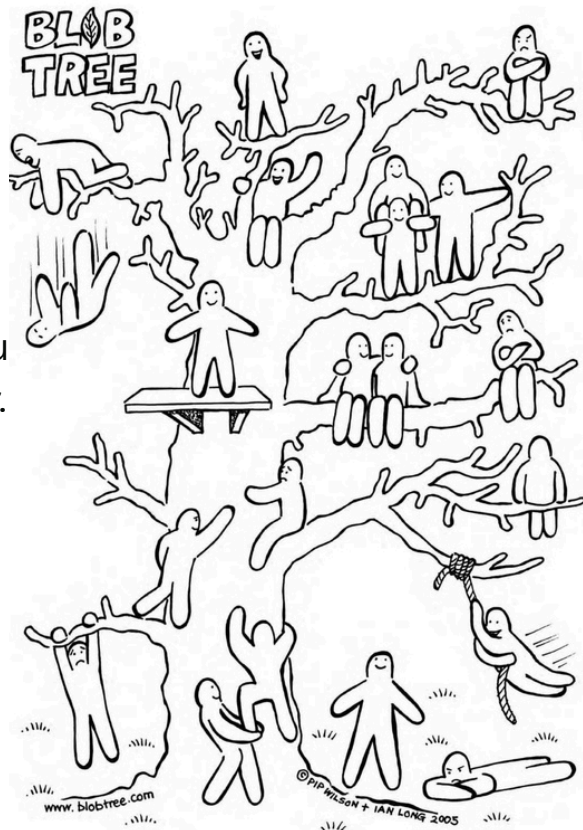


REFLECTION

4. Examine the Blob Tree.

- Locate a Blob person that is:
- expressing an emotion.
- helping another Blob person.
- Think about the **soft skills** you learned about in this chapter.

Can you see any of them being demonstrated here?



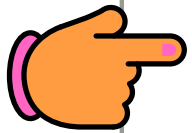
5. Please write down any questions you still have or comments you want to make.



3-2-1 REFLECTION



List 3 things that you learned about Neurodiversity from this chapter.



Describe 2 ways you can assist a peer with the need identified
In this chapter?

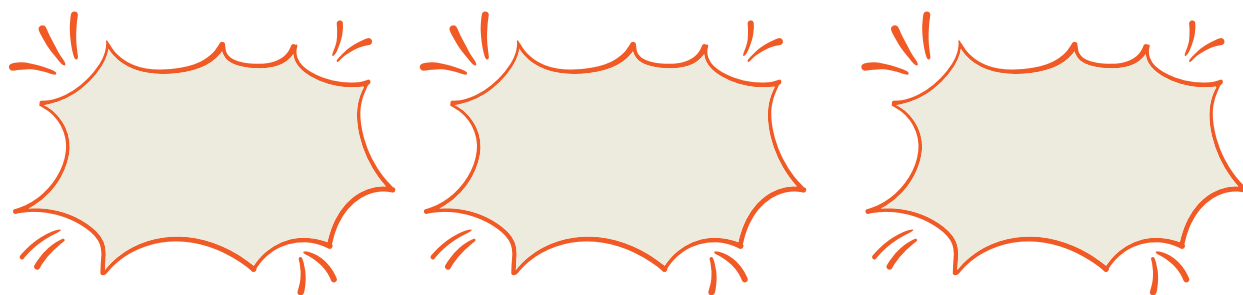


Identify one area you want to personally improve, specifically about including and supporting the need in this chapter.

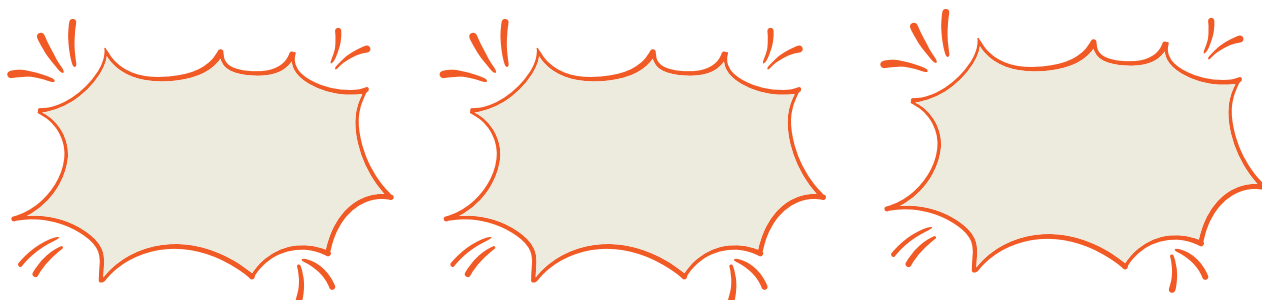


STUDENT CHALLENGE

**Complete a Spider Diagram
for the needs identified in this chapter**



**Specific Learning
Difficulties**





CHAPTER 4

ADHD



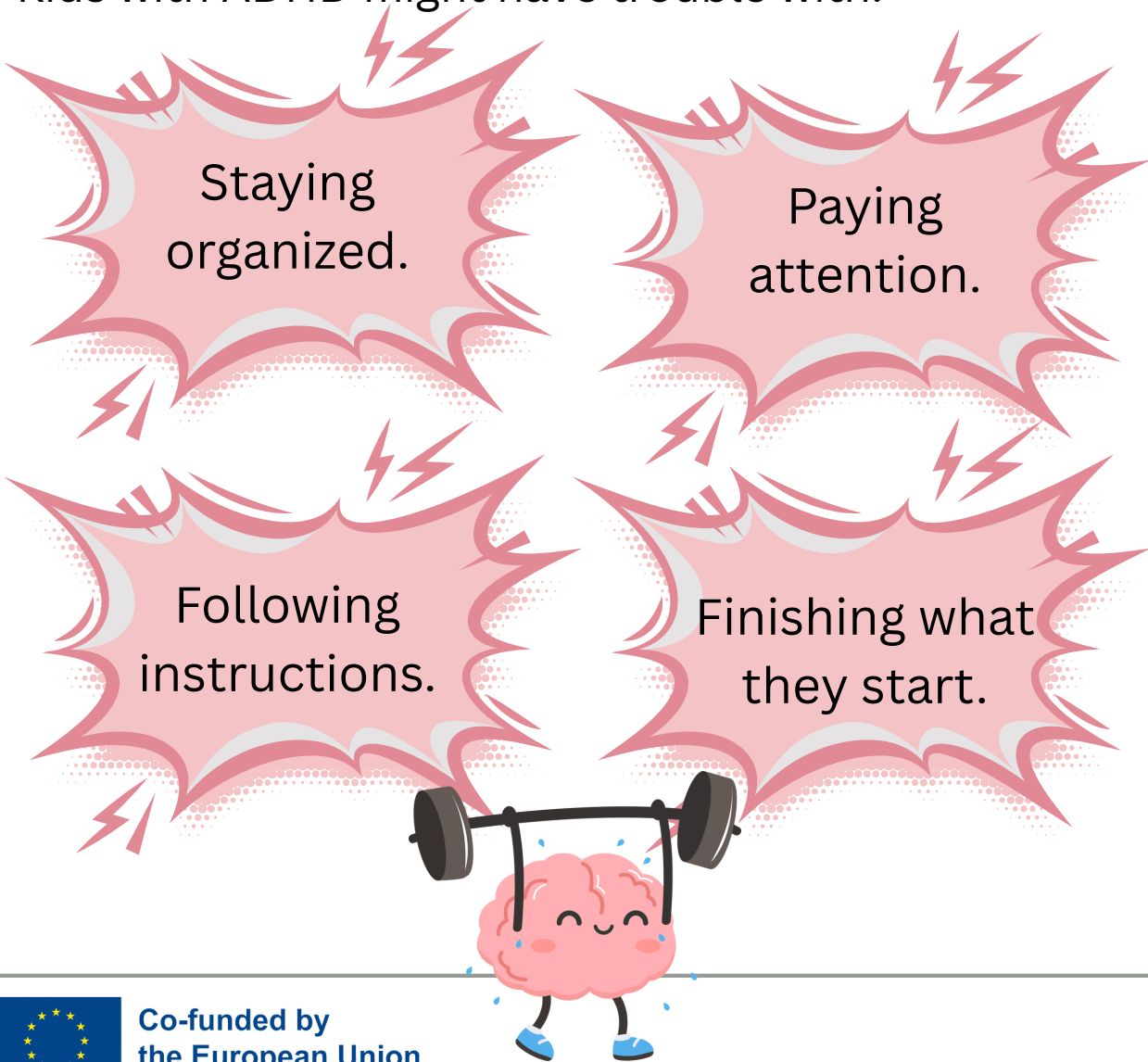
DiverseMind

WHAT IS ADHD?

Do you know someone for whom is harder to focus, control their impulses, and manage their energy? This is the Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

ADHD usually shows up in childhood, but it can also continue into the teenage years and adulthood.

Kids with ADHD might have trouble with:



Staying organized.

Paying attention.

Following instructions.

Finishing what they start.



WHAT IS ADHD?

Sometimes they get distracted easily, forget things, or make mistakes without meaning to.

Many kids with ADHD also:

Find it hard to sit still.

Have trouble waiting their turn or not interrupting.

Move around a lot or feel like they can't stop.

WHAT IS ADHD?

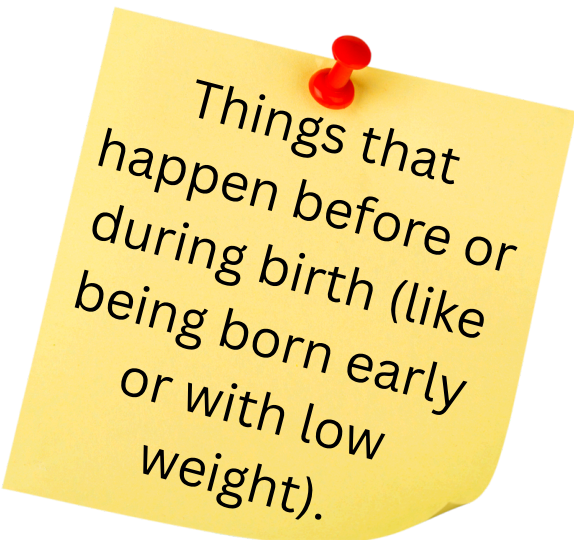
But, why does ADHD happen?
Scientists don't know the exact reason,
but they think it comes from a mix of:



Family traits
(it can be
inherited).



Differences in the
brain areas that
help with
attention and
self-control.



Things that
happen before or
during birth (like
being born early
or with low
weight).





How can ADHD be helped?



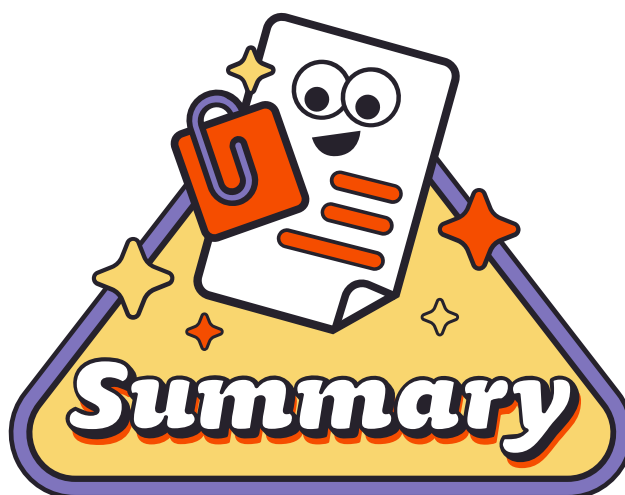
Behavior therapy (learning tricks to get organized, manage time, and get along better with others).

Medicine that helps with focus and self-control.

Healthy habits like exercise, good routines, sleep, and eating well.



Studies estimate the global prevalence of ADHD in children and adolescents to be around 8.0%.



As a summary it is important to keep in mind that having ADHD doesn't mean you can't do amazing things. Many people with this disorder are very creative, great at solving problems, and full of positive energy.

With the right help, support, and understanding, kids with ADHD can use their strengths and reach their full potential.



GAME 1 - A DAY IN LEO'S HEAD

Participants

- Students aged 9–14
- Works best with small groups or whole-class rotations

Game Contents

Three activity stations:

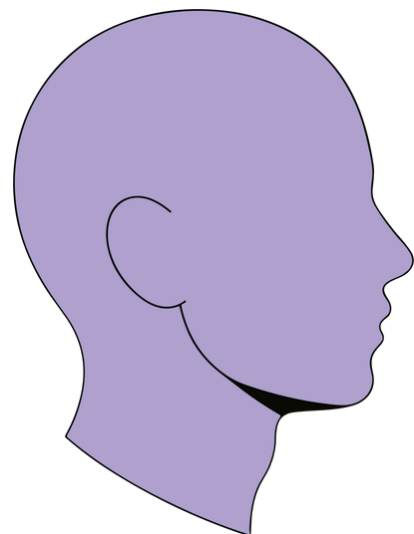
1. **Noise Station** – distractions and background noise
2. **Movement Station** – tasks mixed with physical interruptions
3. **Memory & Change Station** – instructions that change or get interrupted

The Purpose of This Game

To help you understand what school can feel like for someone with ADHD.

By experiencing challenges with focus, movement, and memory, students learn empathy, patience, and ways to support classmates whose brains work differently.

The game shows that ADHD comes with challenges and strengths—creativity, energy, and great ideas.





GAME 1 - A DAY IN LEO'S HEAD

Preparation

- Our teacher will set up the three stations so we know exactly what to do at each one.
- Some of us will help by making noises, giving movement prompts, or changing the rules to show what distractions feel like.
- We'll remember that this game is about understanding each other—not judging or teasing—because everyone's brain works differently, and that's okay.

Game Play

Students rotate through the stations, imagining they are “inside Leo’s head”:

1. Noise Station

- Students try to complete a simple task (copying, small puzzle).
- At the same time, classmates create distracting sounds.
- Students experience how hard it is to focus with constant distractions.



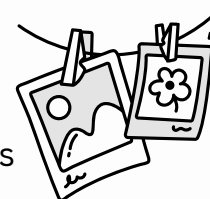
2. Movement Station

- Students follow instructions for a task or game.
- Meanwhile, someone asks them to stand, move seats, or walk around.
- They experience what it's like when the body wants to move even during quiet work.



3. Memory & Change Station

- Students are given a set of instructions.
- The teacher or a classmate suddenly changes the rules or interrupts.
- Students feel how quickly ideas can slip or shift.



After rotating, the class comes together for a reflection on how each station made them feel.



GAME 1 - A DAY IN LEO'S HEAD



The Noise Station: here you will try to do a simple task, like copying something or solving a small puzzle, but at the same time some classmates and the teacher will make noises, talk, shuffle papers, or tap on the desk. This will help you feel how difficult it is to concentrate when the brain is distracted by every sound.



The Movement Station: in this part you will have to listen to instructions or follow a game, but at the same time someone will ask you to stand up, move around, or change seats. This way you will experience how hard it is to keep your attention when your body wants to move all the time.





GAME 1 - A DAY IN LEO'S HEAD



The Memory and Change Station: here you will be given several instructions, but then the teacher or a classmate will interrupt with something different or add new rules. This will help you see how easy it is to forget what you were going to do or to switch quickly from one idea to another without noticing.



GAME 2 - “THE TRAFFIC LIGHT CHALLENGE”

Participants

- Suitable for students aged 7–14
- Can be played individually, in pairs, or as a full class

Game Contents

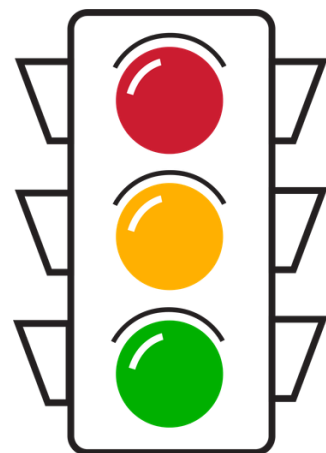
- A **traffic light system** (cards, coloured signs, or digital display):
 - Green, Yellow, Red
- Simple tasks such as:
 - Writing a word
 - Reading quietly
 - Drawing a picture
- Optional movement prompts for the yellow phase

The Purpose of This Game

To help students practise focus, self-control, and flexibility.

Students learn how to start, stop, and change actions quickly—just like real situations where plans or instructions suddenly shift.

The game builds attention skills, teamwork, and awareness of how our bodies and minds respond to changes.

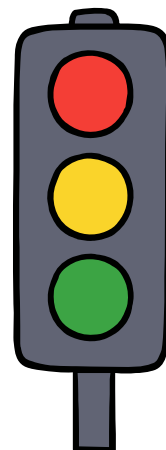




GAME 2 - THE TRAFFIC LIGHT CHALLENGE

Preparation

- Explain how the traffic light colours work.
- Prepare the simple starter task (writing, reading, drawing).
- Decide the yellow-light instructions, such as:
 - “Walk around”
 - “Talk to your partner”
 - “Move your arms”
- Make sure everyone understands that this game is about practising attention—not about being perfect.

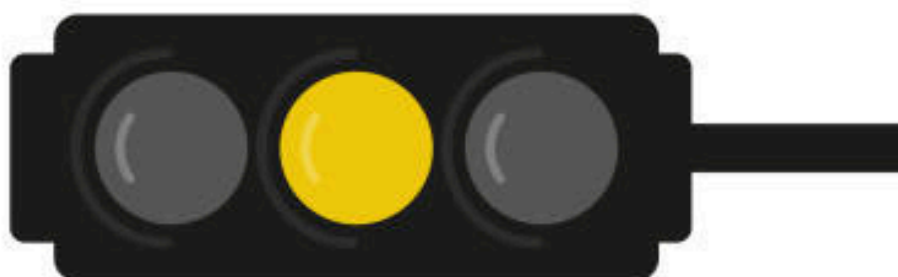
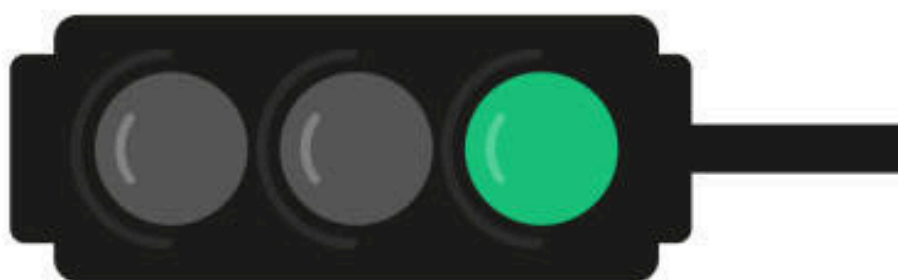


Game Play

1. Students begin with the simple task.
2. The teacher shows a **green light**
→ students continue calmly.
3. The teacher changes to **yellow**
→ students follow a new instruction (move, talk, stretch, etc.).
4. The teacher switches to **red**
→ everyone stops immediately and stays still.
5. The colours keep changing, and students practise switching actions quickly.



GAME 2 - THE TRAFFIC LIGHT CHALLENGE





GAME 2 - THE TRAFFIC LIGHT CHALLENGE

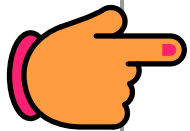




3-2-1 REFLECTION



List 3 things that you learned about Neurodiversity from this chapter.



Describe 2 ways you can assist a peer with the need identified
In this chapter?

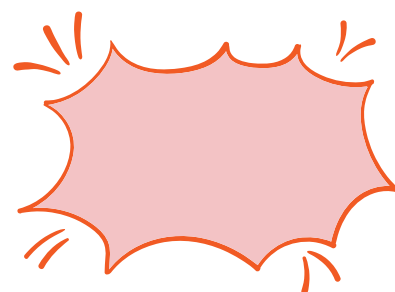
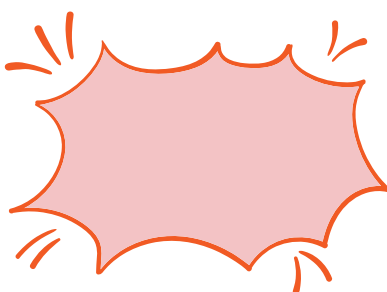
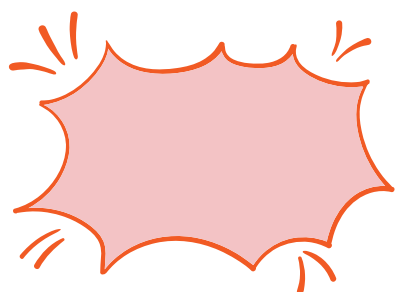


Identify one area you want to personally improve, specifically about including and supporting the need in this chapter.

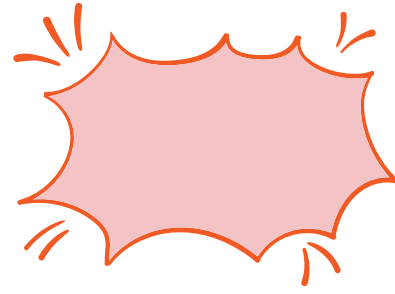
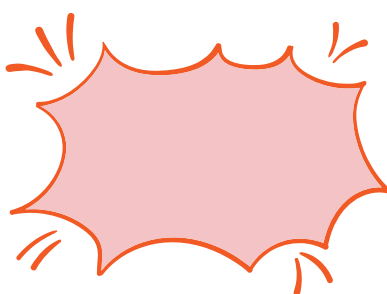
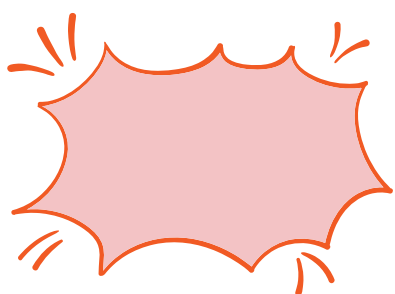


STUDENT CHALLENGE

Complete a Spider Diagram for the needs identified in this chapter



ADHD





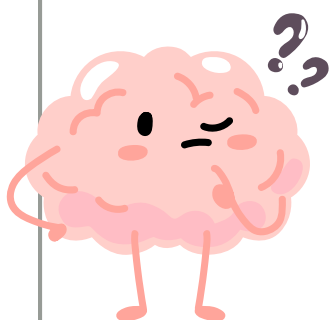
CHAPTER 5

SPECIFIC LANGUAGE DISORDERS



DiverseMind

WHAT IS SPECIFIC LANGUAGE DISORDERS?



Imagine your brain is like a big library full of words. Most kids can easily find the “book” they need when they want to say something.



But for some children, this library is a bit more complicated: the books might be out of order, some pages are missing, or it just takes longer to find the right word.





Why is it important? Understanding Our Friends with Language Difficulties

What are Specific Language Disorders?

Sometimes, some children find it harder to understand, learn, or use words, even though they are just as smart as everyone else.



Think of it like having a **computer that works perfectly fine**, but takes **a little longer to load some words**.

It's not because they don't want to talk or are shy — their brain simply learns language in a different way.



With patience and help, it works just as well!



Why is it important?

Types of Language Disorders

Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)

Children with DLD have trouble learning new words and building sentences.

They might:

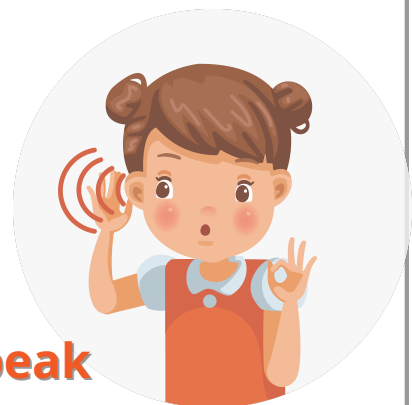
- ➡ Use shorter phrases like *“Me want juice”* instead of *“I want some juice, please.”*
- ➡ Take more time to explain what they mean.
- ➡ Get frustrated when others don’t understand them.

How you
can help:

Listen carefully

Don't interrupt

Give them time to speak





Why is it important?

Types of Language Disorders

Aphasias

Aphasia usually happens after an injury to the brain. It can make it hard to speak, understand, read, or write.

They know what they want to say — their brain just has trouble finding the right words.

EXAMPLE

A classmate may point at a book and say “*uh... read... story,*” when they mean “*Can we read the story together?*”

They are communicating — just in a different way!

**How you
can help:**

Be patient

Encourage them

Don't correct every word

Focus on what they want to say





Why is it important?

Types of Language Disorders

Mutism

This means the child doesn't speak in any situation — not at home, not at school, not with friends.

Their brain and mouth work perfectly fine, but something inside stops them from speaking.

It can be caused by very strong anxiety, trauma, or emotional stress.

Selective Mutism

This means the child can speak in some places — for example, freely at home — but stays completely silent in others, like at school or with strangers.

It's not because they're shy or stubborn. They **want** to talk, but feel very nervous, almost like their voice "gets stuck."

EXAMPLE

A classmate may laugh and talk a lot with their parents but stay silent during class. They might only nod or smile when you talk to them.

How you can help:

Don't force them to speak or say "Come on, talk!"

Talk to them in a calm, friendly voice

Include them in games and activities, even if they don't talk.

Use other ways to communicate — pictures, gestures, notes, or drawing



When they feel safe and accepted, their voice slowly starts to come out.





Why is it important? **How Teachers and Friends Can Notice It**

**They speak less than others
or stay silent in class.**

**They look nervous when
asked to speak.**

**They mix words or take longer to
answer.**

**They get frustrated when people don't
understand them.**

**They might avoid reading aloud or
joining group talk.**





Why is it important?

How Can You Be a Good Friend?

Listen carefully. Give them time to talk — don't rush or interrupt.



Be patient. Don't correct or finish their sentences.



Include them. Even if they don't speak, they can still join activities.



Encourage gently. A smile or "It's okay, take your time" means a lot.

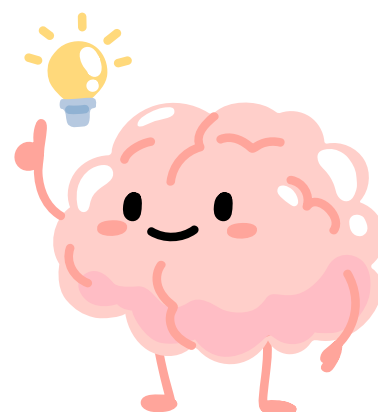
Find other ways to communicate. Use signs, pictures, or writing



Co-funded by
the European Union



Why is it important?



Remember !!!

Having a language disorder or difficulty speaking
doesn't mean being less intelligent or friendly.

It just means their brain works in a
different way.

With patience, kindness, and teamwork, we can
all help them feel understood, included, and
happy

Because in our classroom, every voice
matters — even the quiet ones.



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GAME 1 - APHASIA WORD QUEST

Participants

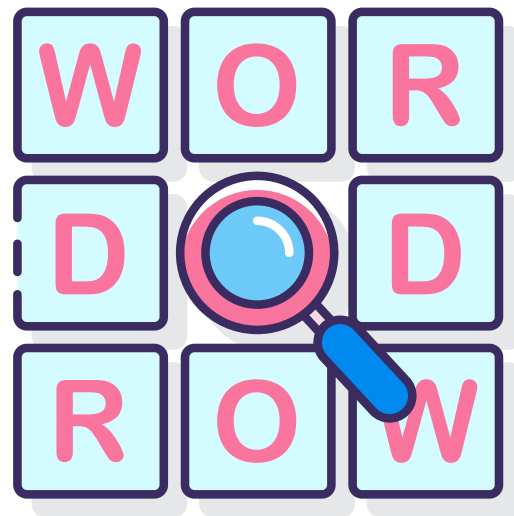
Whole class activity (teacher-facilitated) or small groups of students.

Type of students: General classroom students (could include some with mild language-processing difficulties) and peer participants.

Ages: Recommended approx. 11-15 years (upper-primary to early secondary).

Number of people per group: 3-4 students per group works well.

Duration of the activity: Approximately 30-40 minutes.



Game Contents

- **Word cards** with challenge words (nouns, verbs, adjectives).
- **Hint cards** with clues like word categories, first letters, or gesture prompts.
- **A maze board or path** that shows how far your team moves.
- **Tokens or pawns** to move through the maze.
- A **timer** (optional) for an extra challenge.
- **Reflection sheets** to note which words were tricky and which hints helped.
- **A whiteboard or display area** for instructions and tracking progress.



GAME 1 - APHASIA WORD QUEST

Objectives

- To **increase awareness** of the word-retrieval difficulties experienced by people with aphasia.
- To **engage students** in practicing word retrieval strategies in a game-based format.
- To **promote empathy** by allowing peer students to experience and support retrieval challenges.
- To **strengthen students' vocabulary** and ability to use cues when stuck on word retrieval.

Game Play

1

Introduction (5 minutes): The teacher explains the scenario: each group's character must navigate a "maze of words". They start at the beginning of the path.





GAME 1 - APHASIA WORD QUEST

2

Warm-up (5 minutes): Each group draws one easy word card and practices retrieving the word and using a cue if needed, to familiarize with the mechanism.

3

Main game phase (20-25 minutes):

- Each group in turn draws a word card. The student reads the description/clue and attempts to retrieve the word.
- If the student retrieves it correctly within a set time (e.g., 30 seconds), they move the token forward one step.
- If they cannot recall the word, they pick a cue card (semantic clue, first-letter, gesture) and try again.
- If still unable, the teacher may model the word and the team still moves one step (to maintain momentum).
- Groups continue until they reach the end of the maze or time runs out.

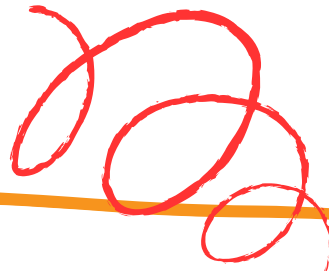
4

Reflection & debrief (5-10 minutes): Each group fills the worksheet: which words were difficult, which cues helped, how it felt to hesitate or need a hint. Then class discussion: what did it feel like when retrieving words was hard? What can peers do to support someone in that situation?



GAME 1 - APHASIA WORD QUEST

Tips for Teachers



- Make sure word cards are appropriately graduated from easier to more challenging for different student levels.
- Encourage students to use the cues rather than guess wildly—this mirrors real therapeutic strategies for aphasia.
- Promote a supportive, non-judgmental atmosphere: delays or needing hints are part of the process, not failures.
- Use the debrief to highlight how word retrieval difficulties might feel frustrating, and how classmates can provide cues, patience or encouragement.
- Consider mixed-ability grouping so stronger students support weaker ones, promoting peer learning and empathy.
- If possible, include visuals or gestures alongside word cards (many aphasia-friendly resources recommend this to support retrieval).





GAME 1 - APHASIA WORD QUEST

Educational Value of the Game



- The game transforms a therapeutic activity (word-retrieval practice for aphasia) into an engaging, collaborative classroom format, thereby promoting vocabulary skills, faster retrieval, and use of supportive cues.
- It builds empathy: by experiencing the challenge of retrieving words under pressure or with hints, students gain insight into what individuals with aphasia face.
- It enhances peer support and communication skills: students discuss strategies, give hints, and reflect on each other's experiences.
- It promotes metacognitive awareness: students reflect on which strategies helped, how it felt to hesitate, and how they can support others—thereby improving self-regulation and social emotional learning.
- It aligns with inclusive education: by bringing awareness of language disorders into the classroom, it fosters a more inclusive and understanding environment.



3 JOURNEY	8 DISCOVER	ANCIENT	WHISPER	SHADOW
FRAGILE	EXHAUST	MOUNTAIN	BRIGHT	GESTURE
MEMORY	CURIOUS	SHADOW	RESCUE	





JURNEY

- Something related to travel or trip
- First-letter hint
J
- Gesture
Pretend to walk or travel (hand over forehead like looking far)

DISCOVER

- Action of finding something new
- First-letter hint
D
- Gesture
Make eyes wide and point far away, as if seeing something hidden

ANCIENT

- Related to very old things / history
- First-letter hint
A
- Gesture
Make a gesture like dusting off old object; act "old"

WHISPER

- Action of speaking quietly
- First-letter hint
W
- Gesture
Make a gesture like dusting off old object; act "old"

SHADOW

- Related to light / dark shape on ground
- First-letter hint
S
- Gesture
Use your hand to cast a "shadow" on the floor / wall

FRAGILE

- Adjective meaning "easily broken"
- First-letter hint
F
- Gesture
Cup your hands gently around an imaginary object, like "handle with care"

ESHAUST

- Action of using up energy / getting very tired
- First-letter hint
E
- Gesture
Yawn and stretch arms as if tired

BRIGHT

- Adjective meaning "very light / shining / intelligent"
- First-letter hint
B
- Gesture
Shade eyes and look ahead as if facing bright sun, or point to head (for "intelligent")

GESTURE

- Action or noun meaning a movement to communicate
- First-letter hint
G
- Gesture
Move hands to express something (wave, point, shrug)

RESCUE

- Action or noun meaning a movement to communicate
- First-letter hint
R
- Gesture
Pretend to lift or help someone up, or act like carrying a person

MEMORY

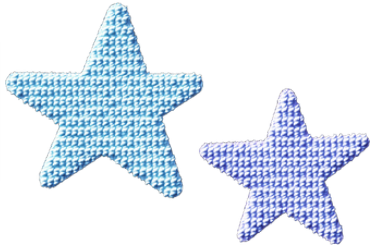
- Related to remembering / thoughts / past events
- First-letter hint
M
- Gesture
Tap your temple with a finger, look thinking

CURIOUS

- Adjective meaning "wanting to know / interested"
- First-letter hint
C
- Gesture
Lean forward, eyes wide, hand to chin as "thinking"



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START



FINISH





GAME 1 - APHASIA WORD QUEST

Reflections:

WORKSHEETS FOR GROUPS:

Which words were difficult?

Which cues helped?

How it felt to hesitate or need a hint.

CLASS DISCUSSION:

What did it feel like when retrieving words was hard?

What can peers do to support someone in that situation?



GAME 2 - SILENT SIGNALS

Participants

Whole class , divided into small groups

- Type of students: General classroom students (can include peers and ideally a safe, inclusive environment for those with selective mutism)
- Ages: Approximately 8-12 years (upper primary)
- Number of people per group: 4-5 students per group
- Duration of the activity: Around 30 minutes



Game Content

- Situation cards (each showing a social scenario in which communication via speech might be expected)
- Tape or floor markers to designate two zones or roles (for example: "actor zone" and "observer zone")
- Optional: props or simple items relevant to each scenario (e.g., toy phone, friendship-card, classroom object)
- Reflection worksheets for each student (to record how they felt, what non-verbal cues were used, and how the scenario could feel for someone with selective mutism)
- Whiteboard or display to show instructions and prompt discussion



GAME 2 - SILENT SIGNALS

Objectives

- Raise awareness of the challenges children with selective mutism face in social situations
- Develop students' abilities to use and interpret non-verbal communication (gestures, facial expressions, body language)
- Encourage empathy, peer support and a classroom culture of inclusion
- Provide safe, low-pressure opportunities for communication practice

Phases of the Game

1

Introduction (5 minutes): The teacher explains the concept of selective mutism (without forcing disclosure) and introduces the game: students will act out social scenarios without speaking, using only signals and gestures. Emphasis on safety, respect, no pressure to speak.





GAME 2 - SILENT SIGNALS

2

Group formation and role assignment (2 minutes): Students are divided into groups of 4-5. Within each group, designate one student as “actor” (who will enact the scenario silently) and the others as “guessers/observers”. Assign a scenario card to each group.

3

Game phase (20 minutes):

- The actor enters the “actor zone” and silently acts out the scenario using gestures, facial expression, body movement, maybe props, but no speech.
- The observers/guessers attempt to interpret what the actor is communicating and guess the scenario or the message.

- After the guess, the group discusses which signals were effective, what was confusing, and how it felt to rely on non-verbal cues.
- Rotate roles so multiple students act and observe. Each group may complete 2-3 scenario cards within the time.

4

Reflection & Debrief (3 minutes): Each student completes the reflection worksheet: how did it feel acting without speech? How did it feel trying to interpret? What might this feel like for someone with selective mutism in a speaking-expected context? Then a brief class discussion: highlight respectful peer behaviour, supportive strategies, importance of non-verbal communication.

5

Closure (optional): Encourage students to think of one gesture or signal they could use in class to support a peer who feels anxious about speaking (e.g., a thumbs-up, a nod, allowing extra time).





GAME 2 - SILENT SIGNALS

Tips for teachers

- Create a safe, non-judgemental atmosphere: emphasise that everyone may feel uneasy at some point and that's okay.
- Avoid forcing verbal responses from students with selective mutism; this game uses non-verbal communication to reduce pressure. This aligns with guidance that "pressurising a child to speak will only increase anxiety and hinder them further." [Twinkl+2elmtreeclinic.ca+2](https://www.twinkl.com/primary/resources/primary-communication-activities)
- Select scenario cards that are age-appropriate, familiar to students, and gradually increase in complexity if desired.
- Encourage reflective discussion about how communication happens beyond words: gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, posture.
- Use labeled praise and positive reinforcement for participation and respectful peer support. Thriving Minds
- If a student with selective mutism is present, ensure their comfort: allow them to observe at first if acting is too much pressure; emphasise no one has to speak during the activity unless they choose to.
- Link the activity to real-life classroom strategies: e.g., "If a classmate is silent, how could you show support with a gesture or by giving them extra time?"

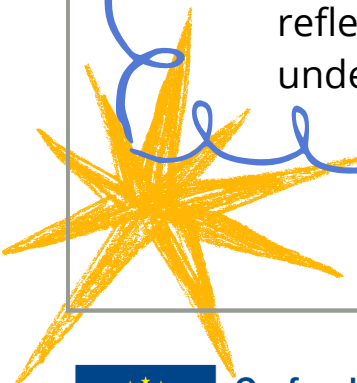


GAME 2 - SILENT SIGNALS

Educational Value of the Game



- Helps all students develop and strengthen non-verbal communication skills, an important component of social interaction and inclusive classrooms.
- Builds empathy: by experiencing communication without speech and interpreting others' signals, students better understand challenges faced by peers with selective mutism.
- Promotes a culture of peer support and inclusive practice: students learn to respect different communication styles and adapt accordingly.
- Reduces stigma around selective mutism by making communication differences visible and normalising non-verbal interaction and support.
- Enhances social-emotional learning: students reflect on feelings of vulnerability, being understood, and supporting others.



Greeting a friend at recess

Walking over, seeing a friend, raising a hand or waving, smiling, slight head nod.

Asking to borrow a pencil in class

The student needs a pencil while a peer is writing: they must silently indicate they want to borrow it (e.g. hand extend, pointing) without speaking.

Raising your hand to answer a question

Sitting at desk, looking at teacher, raising hand, wait, then looking hesitant or shy (hands together, lowered gaze).

Asking permission to go to the bathroom

Touching ear or head (like “I need something”), then pointing toward the door, looking at teacher with shy/urgent expression, hand gesture asking for permission.

Buying a snack in the school cafeteria

Standing in line or pretend line, using hands to mimic “taking food”, pointing to imaginary food, miming payment or handing over money, but without speaking.

Saying “goodbye” to a friend after class

Pretending to put on coat / backpack, turning toward friend, making a goodbye wave or hand-kiss gesture, smiling, then walking away.

Responding to a compliment on a drawing / homework

Smiling broadly, placing hand on heart or chest, giving thumbs-up or both hands in “thank-you” gesture.

Inviting a classmate to play at recess

Pretending to hold a ball or game object, looking at classmate, beckoning with hand (“come on”), smiling, using inviting posture or gesture.

Expressing you don’t understand a class instruction

Frowning or puzzled face, shrugging shoulders, raising hands palms-up, tilting head, maybe pointing to ear or notebook with questioning look.

GAME 2 - SILENT SIGNALS

Reflections



Scenario (letter/name)

- How did you feel acting silently? (anxious / comfortable / frustrated / shy / calm / other — choose or write)
- Which non-verbal cues did you use? (gesture — wave, nod, point; facial expression; writing; holding card; other)
- Did observers correctly understand what you intended? (Yes / No / Unsure — explain)
- Which cues worked best?
- Which cues were unclear / confusing?
- How do you think a real child with selective mutism may feel in similar situations?
- What can classmates or teachers do to support a non-speaking peer? (waiting, giving nods, providing a card/communication support, being patient, not pressuring to speak)
- Personal take-away: something you learned about non-verbal communication / inclusion / empathy



GAME 3 - LANGUAGE BUILDERS

Participants

Students working in small groups, facilitated by the teacher.

- Type of students: General classroom students, particularly useful for those with or without language development needs (including students with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)).
- Ages: Recommended approx. 8-12 years (later primary school).
- Number of people per group: 3-4 students per group.
- Duration of the activity: Approximately 35-45 minutes.



Game Content

- Sets of letter cards (e.g., individual alphabet letters) or magnetic letters.
- Sets of image cards representing common objects, actions or concepts (e.g., “dog”, “running”, “homework”).
- Sentence-construction cards or strips (optional) that provide sentence starters or slots for words.
- Worksheet for each group (or student) to record the words they form, the sentences they construct, and reflection on the process.
- Whiteboard or interactive display to show instructions, examples and group progress.
- Timer or stopwatch (optional) to add a challenge element.
- Differentiation materials: easier letter sets or simpler image cards for students needing more support; more complex ones for advanced students (e.g., abstract nouns, adjectives, adverbs).



GAME 3 - LANGUAGE BUILDERS

Objectives

- To develop vocabulary and sentence-construction skills in classroom students, with particular benefit for students with developmental language difficulties such as DLD.
- To foster collaborative work and peer-supported language learning.
- To help students become more aware of how sentences are built: word order, grammar, meaning and contextual fit.
- To boost confidence in using language to express ideas and thoughts in complete sentences.

Game Play

1

Introduction (5 minutes): The teacher introduces the game scenario: each group will receive letter cards and image cards; their task is to form a word that matches the image, then use that word in a meaningful sentence. The teacher models one example: shows "image: cat", letter cards c-a-t, forms the word "cat" and then constructs a sentence: "The cat is sleeping on the sofa."





GAME 3 - LANGUAGE BUILDERS

2

Group activity – Round 1 (10 minutes): Each group receives one image card and a set of letter cards. They collaborate to arrange the letters to form the correct word corresponding to the image. Then they write down the sentence using that word. The teacher circulates and supports groups as needed, particularly those who struggle with spelling or sentence formulation.

3

Group activity – Round 2 (10 minutes): Each group gets a new image card (slightly more challenging) and must form the word, then construct a longer sentence or add an adjective/adverb e.g., “The energetic dog runs quickly in the park.”

4

Group activity – Round 3 (10 minutes): Optionally, each group receives two image cards and must form two words and create a short narrative or mini-dialogue incorporating both words (e.g., “The rabbit hides under the table when the loud thunder booms.”).

5

Closure (optional): Reflection & Sharing (5-10 minutes): Each group presents one of their sentences/narratives to the class. Then the class or teacher leads a reflection: Which words were harder? How did we decide on correct spelling? How did we decide on sentence structure (word order, meaning)? How might someone with DLD experience difficulty in this task (e.g., limited vocabulary, trouble organizing sentences)? students to think of one gesture or signal they could use in class to support a peer who feels anxious about speaking (e.g., a thumbs-up, a nod, allowing extra time).





GAME 3 - LANGUAGE BUILDERS

Tips for Teachers

- Prepare differentiated sets of image and letter cards to match student proficiency levels. Some students may need simpler vocabulary and more scaffolding; others can challenge themselves.
- Encourage peer-support within groups: students who complete early can help others, fostering inclusive collaboration.
- Use scaffolding prompts: if a group struggles, provide a first-letter hint, synonyms, or ask guiding questions (“What is the object? What is the action? What is happening?”).
- Highlight grammar and sentence structure explicitly: discuss word order (“subject – verb – object”), plurals, adjectives/adverbs, correct spelling.
- Promote positive feedback: celebrate correct sentences, creative ideas, and collaborative effort. Encourage students with difficulties to persist and appreciate progress.
- Relate the activity to real-life tasks: writing story sentences, explaining ideas in class, answering questions in lessons. Emphasize that many class activities require constructing sentences from ideas and words.
- For students with DLD, monitor for signs of struggle: difficulty retrieving words, disorganized sentence structure, or avoiding participation. Provide additional support like visuals, word banks or peer-buddy systems.





GAME 3 - LANGUAGE BUILDERS

Educational Value of the Game

- The activity supports language development: by physically manipulating letters and constructing words and sentences, students engage active learning which enhances both vocabulary and grammar skills.
- It fosters inclusive peer learning: students with stronger language skills support those with weaker ones, promoting empathy, cooperation, and shared achievement.
- It explicitly addresses challenges faced by students with DLD: limited vocabulary, difficulties organizing sentences, retrieving words, and expressing ideas clearly. By practising in a game format, these students gain confidence and improved capability.
- It promotes metacognitive awareness: reflection on word formation, sentence construction and the process of composing helps students think about how they use language, not just what they say, thereby strengthening self-regulation and strategic language use.
- It aligns with curricular language objectives: vocabulary acquisition, sentence writing, grammar, collaborative learning, and speaking/presentation skills all intersect.
- It supports inclusive education and neurodiversity awareness: by engaging all students in language-rich activities and providing differentiated support, it helps build classroom environments that recognise and support language variation.

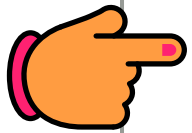




3-2-1 REFLECTION



List 3 things that you learned about Neurodiversity from this chapter.



Describe 2 ways you can assist a peer with the need identified
In this chapter?

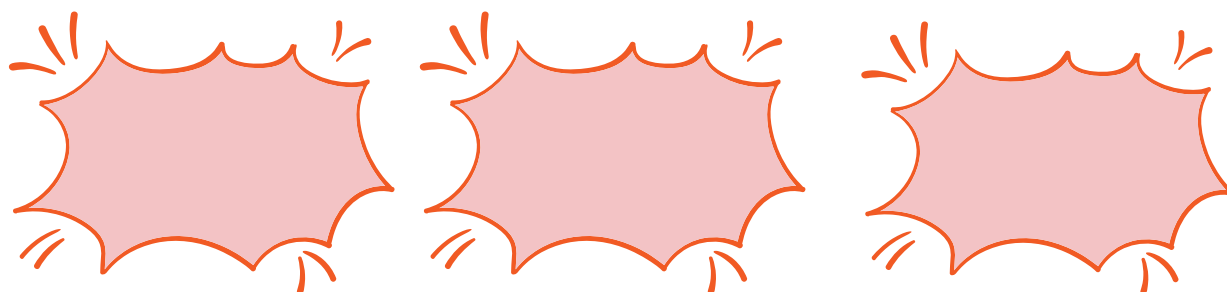


Identify one area you want to personally improve, specifically about including and supporting the need in this chapter.

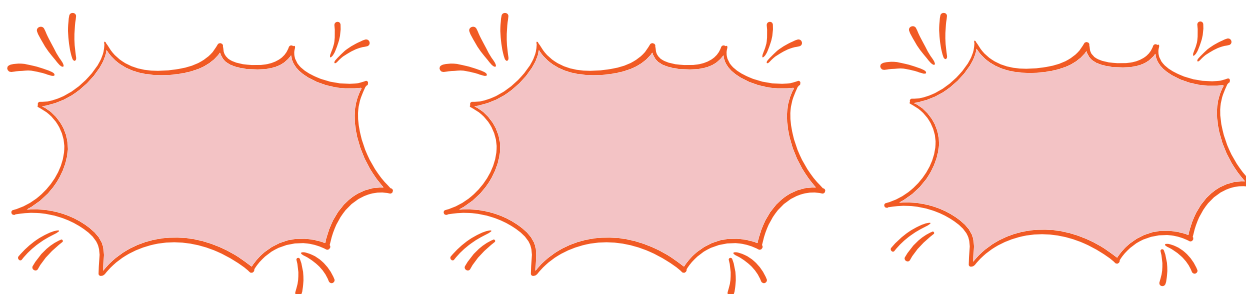


STUDENT CHALLENGE

Complete a Spider Diagram for the needs identified in this chapter



Specific Language Disorders



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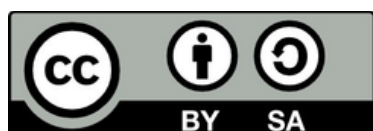
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