



Tips for Teaching Students with Autism

Academic Strategies

- Adjust order of instruction.
- Use guided notes and advance organizers.
- Vary group/independent work arrangements.
- Schedule benchmarks for long assignments.
- Color coded assignment folders.
- Use notebook to organize
- Minimize “self-selection” of work
- May need to modify assignments for students who MUST finish before going on.
- “Finish Later” file / folder / box

Social Interaction

- Help the student become aware that other people have thoughts and feelings that may be different to their own.
- Accept that the student may need time out from the demands of social interaction; you need to have a plan for these times.
- Understand the student’s difficulty interpreting social cues.
- Model and prompt the appropriate social behavior.
- Use social stories for providing direction and to teach social skills
- Use the “peer buddy” system (with caution)
- Offer opportunities for “structured play” during recess and “free time”
- Practice “appropriate” interactions (asking for help, initiating and facilitating interactions)

Sensory

- Students with autism can be distracted by minor background noise.
- The student may feel sensory overload from visual stimuli, the close proximity of others or from physical contact.

Communication

- Simplify your language.
- Be aware of language that is likely to be interpreted literally.
- Do not overload the student with verbal directions or requests.
- Avoid sarcasm and irony; metaphors may be confusing.
- Before you speak, say the student’s name to gain his/her attention.
- Give one instruction at a time. Allow the student sufficient time to interpret then respond to an instruction. This may take longer in children with ASD.
- Encourage eye contact, but don’t insist if this causes anxiety.
- Be aware that facial expressions and gestures may be misinterpreted.
- Use visual cues to support verbal communication.

Remember

- Predictability and routine are important but allow for some flexibility in the student’s routine so that he/she learns to cope with minor changes in a supportive environment.
- Student with ASD need lots of opportunities

with peers). One strategy – video modeling

- Training on feelings, emotions, and body language
 - Class environment conducive to risk taking.
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Behavior

Behavior

- Challenging behavior is nearly always an attempt to communicate, remember that the student is not being 'bad' Try to identify the trigger for the behavior.
 - The student may have outbursts of aggression just like a much younger child due to delayed emotional development.
 - Be consistent in everything you do.
 - Design predictable routines so that the student knows what is expected of him/her and what he/she can expect each day.
 - Always give advance warning of changes in routine.
 - Tell the student what you expect of him/her rather than telling him/her what you don't want.
 - Remember that common techniques for calming an anxious student, like cuddling, or sitting the student on your knee, may have the opposite effect on a child with ASD.
 - Don't try to stop odd or repetitive behavior unless it interferes with learning or threatens the wellbeing of other students. It is better to modify the behavior.
 - Look at ways of using a student's preferred interest in play and learning activities.
 - Monitor the student's ability to cope in the playground; he may need time to unwind after recess and lunch breaks if he finds this time stressful.
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to learn the same thing in various situations and contexts to encourage generalization of skills.

- Ensure that the student has all the books and materials he needs for each class or activity.
 - Be persistent and consistent. Progress may be slow and results can be difficult to see at first.
 - Try to stay calm and positive.
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