



Autism Spectrum Disorder & Essential Classroom Strategies

Presenter: Suzanne Donnelly

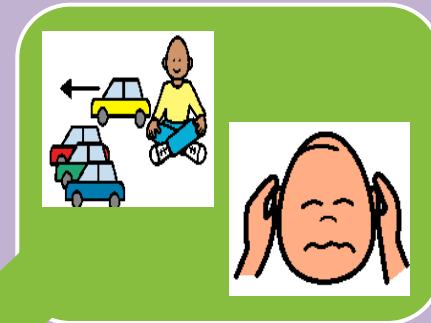
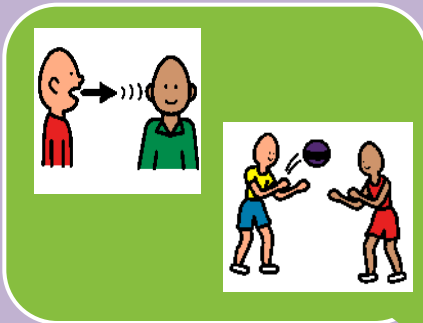
Overview

1. What is autism?
2. Characteristics of autism
3. Essential classroom strategies

What is autism?

“Autism” is a way of being. It is pervasive, it colours every experience, every sensation, perception, thought, emotion and encounter, every aspect of existence. It is not possible to separate the autism from the person - and if it were possible, the person you had left would not be the person you started with”.

- Jim Sinclair, 1993



Autism Spectrum Disorder

**Symptoms must be present in early childhood (but may not become apparent until social demands exceed limited capacities)
Symptoms together limit and impair everyday functioning**

Slide adapted from Positive Partnerships

Always

Unique

Totally

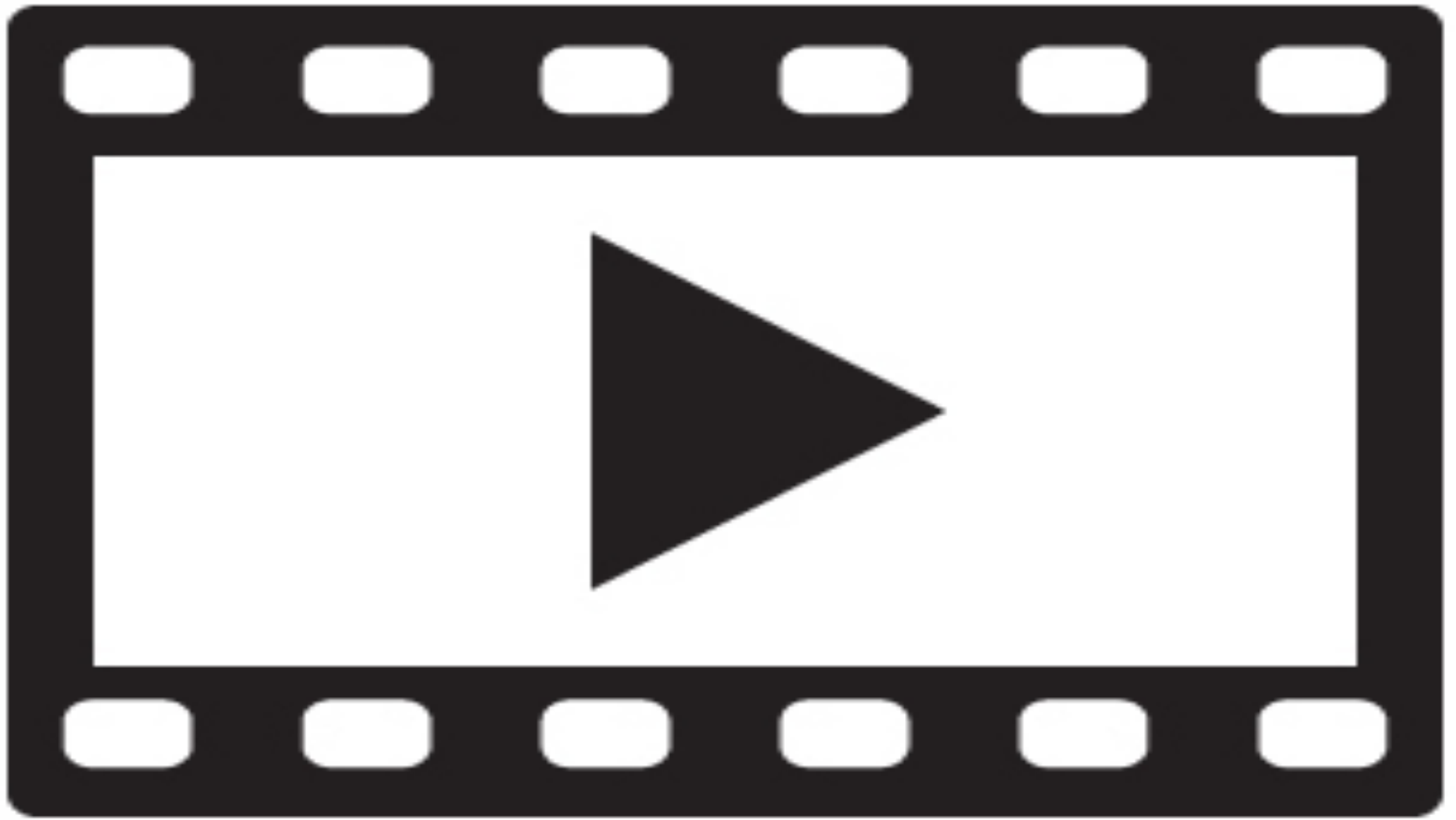
Interesting

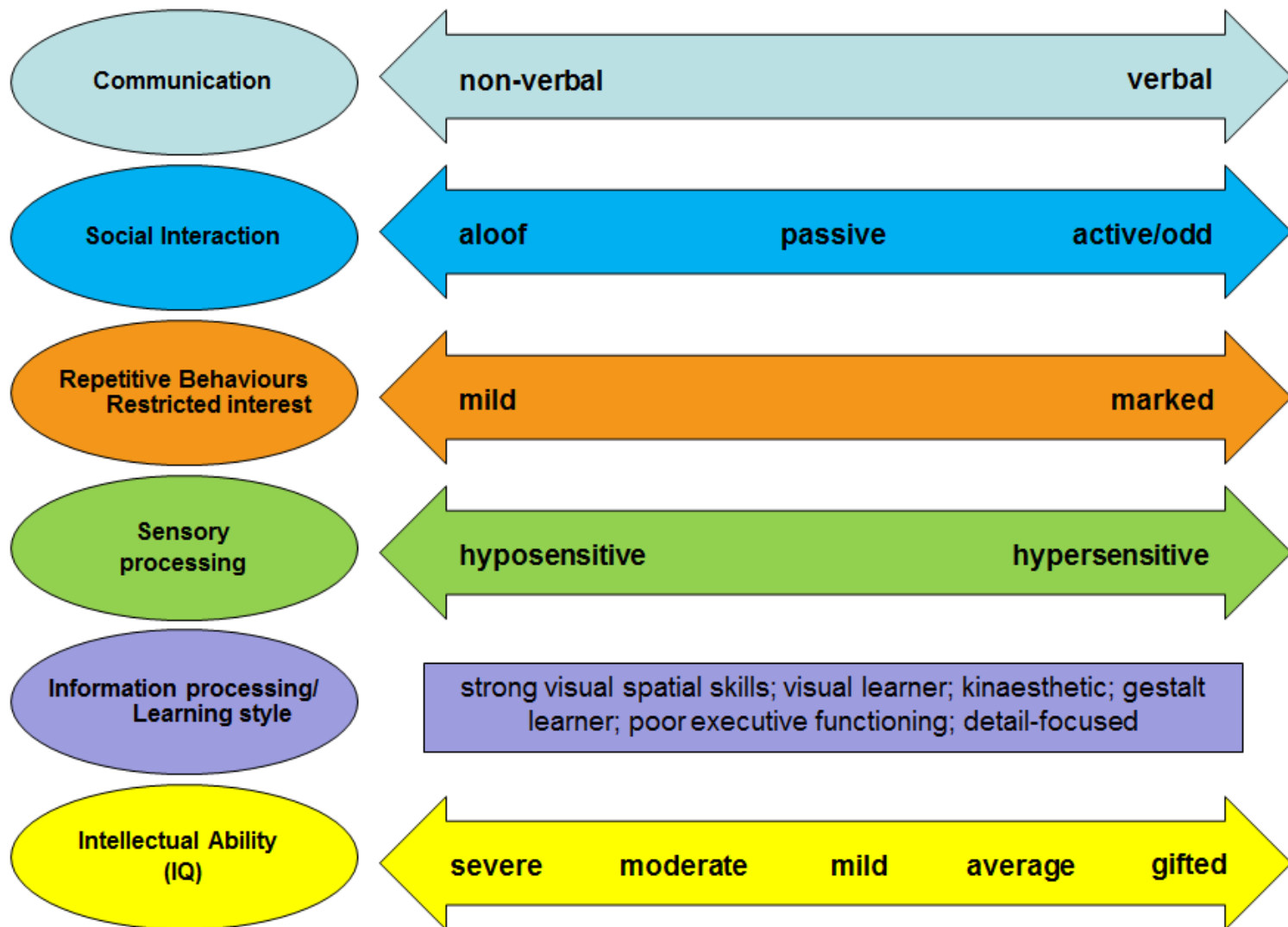
SOMETIMES

MYSTERIOUS



Each child with ASD will present differently...if you have met one child with ASD, you have met one child with ASD.





Slide from Positive Partnerships

Communication

Communication difficulties may include:

- Delayed speech development
- Impairment in expressive and receptive communication
- Echolalia
- Differences in body language
- Literal interpretation of language

Social Interaction

Social interaction difficulties may include:

- Differences in facial expression
- Lack of desire to interact or difficulty knowing how to interact
- May have very different interests and priorities to their peers
- Social skills issues

Restricted Interests/Repetitive Behaviour (RI/RB)

RI/RB may include:

- Adherence to routine
- Difficulty with change
- Strong interests or obsessions
- Need for sameness
- Repetitive motor mannerisms

Sensory Processing

Sensory processing difficulties may include:

- Over-sensitive or under-sensitive in any of the seven senses
 - Auditory
 - Visual
 - Tactile
 - Gustatory
 - Olfactory
 - Proprioception
 - Vestibular

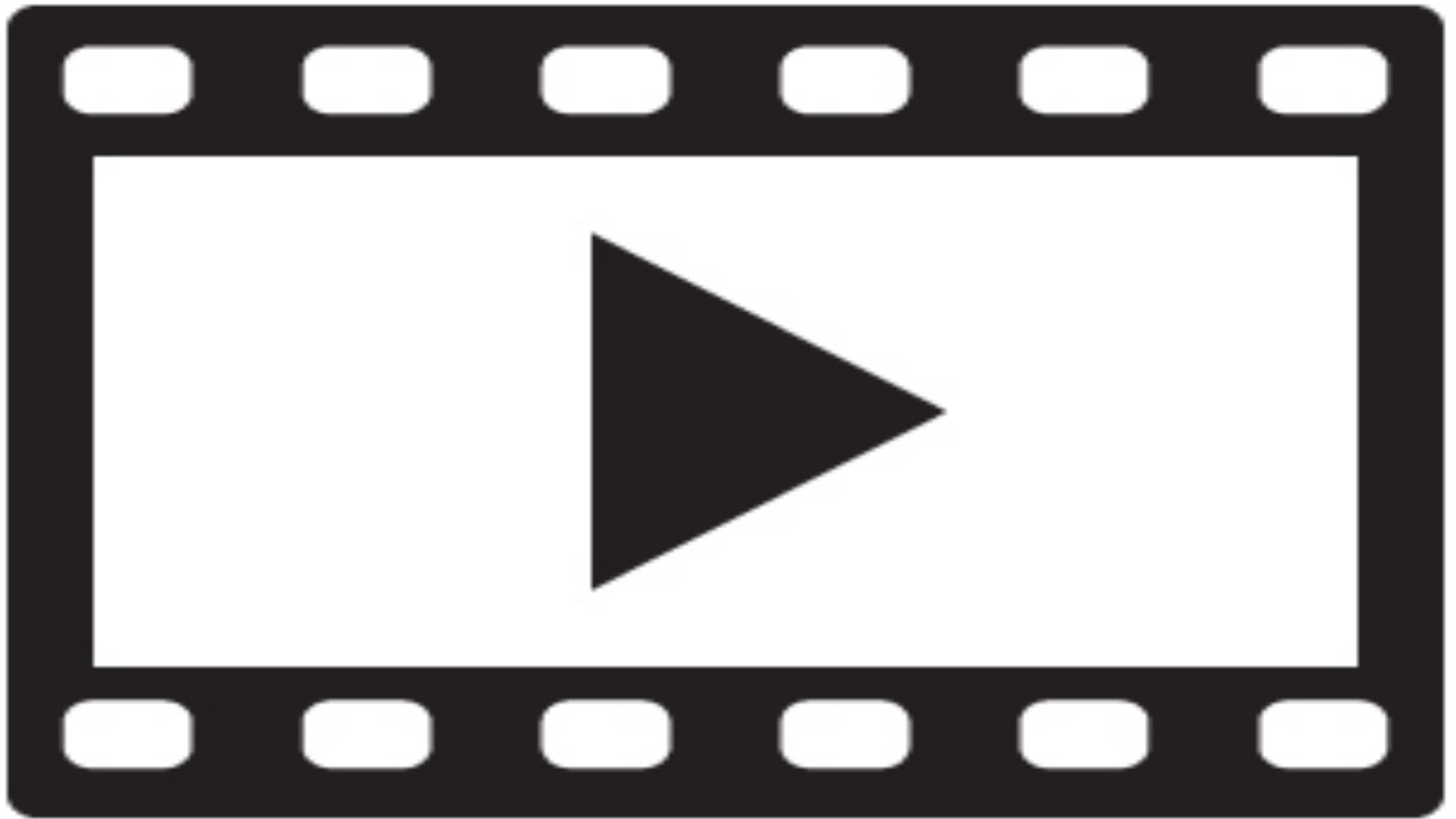
Information Processing

Information processing differences may include:

- Weak central coherence
- Executive functioning difficulties
- Visual thinker
- Poor theory of mind

Essential Strategies

- Visuals
- Routines
- Structure
- Targeted sensory supports
- Use of special interests



Visual Supports

“Visual supports are used to enhance communication, transfer information, support behaviour and develop independence. Visual supports assist people to communicate and to understand what is happening around them.”

- Dodd, S. (2005) Understanding Autism. p.250

In a nut shell they are supports that present information visually.

Hierarchy of visual supports:

1. Real objects

2. Remnants



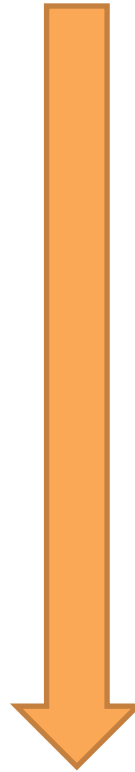
3. Photographs



4. Line drawings

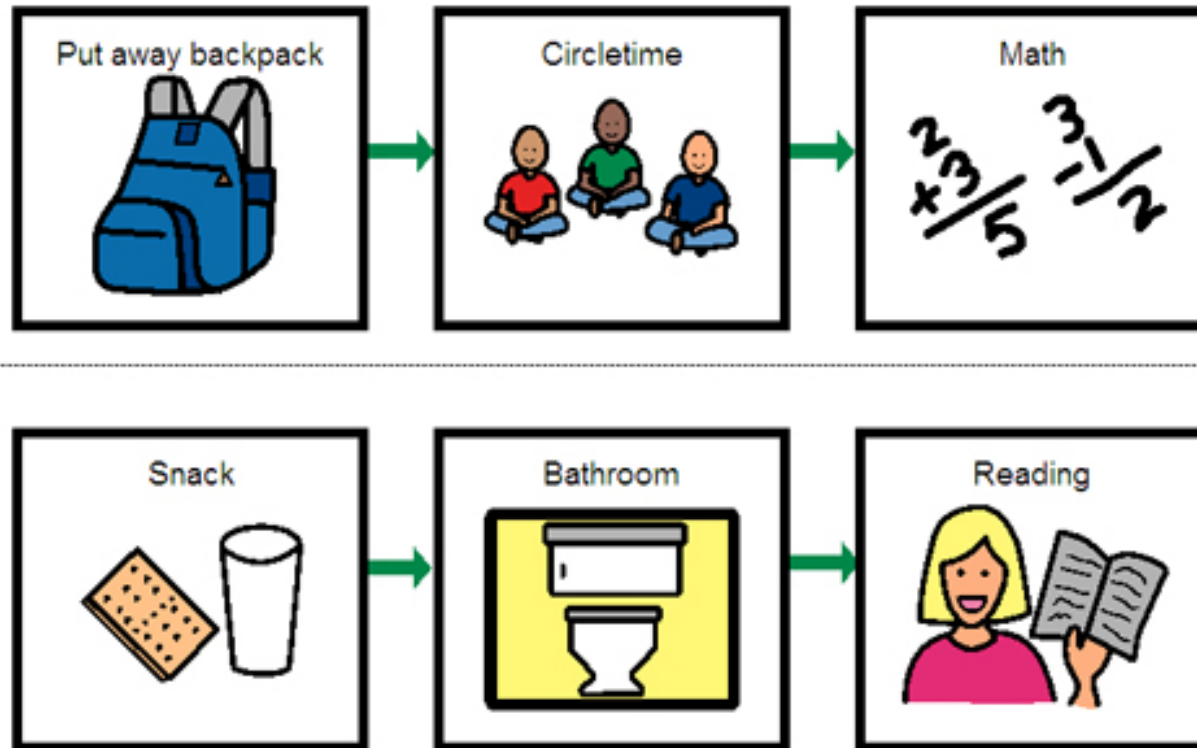


5. Words

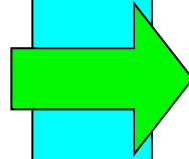


For
expressive
and
receptive
communication

Morning Schedule

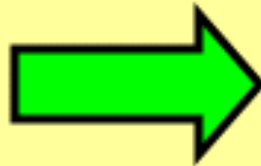


Change



First

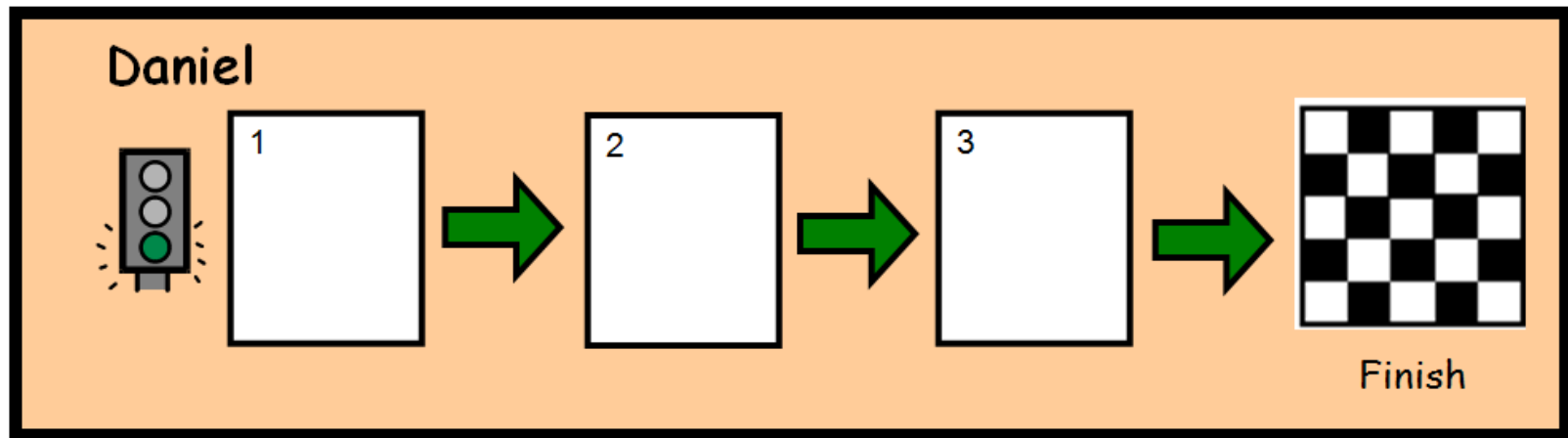
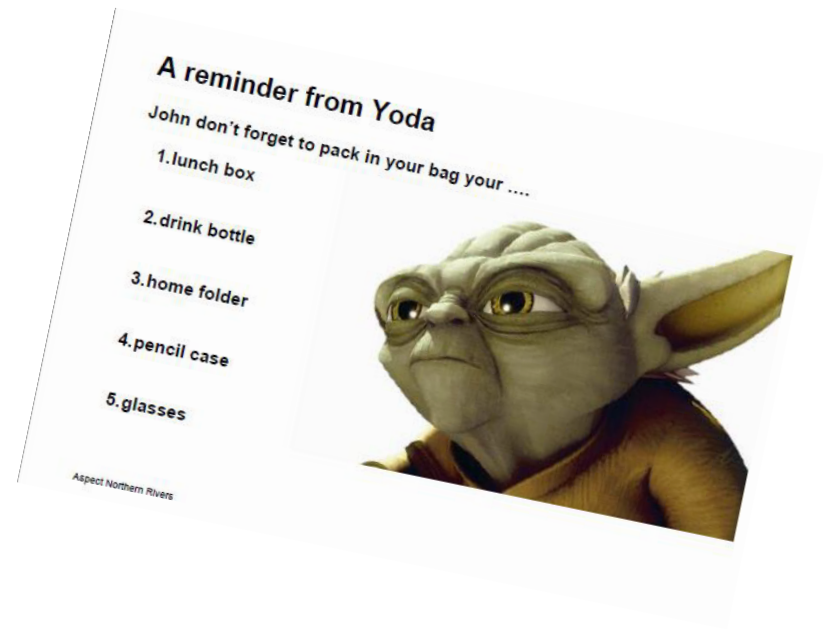
read



Then

computer





Things to consider when setting up visual supports:

- **What is each student's level of understanding?**
- **What is the main message you want to convey?**
- **How is the student going to manipulate/have access to the visual support?**
- **Is the visual support motivating?**
- **How are you going to teach the use of the visual support?**

Routines

“Children with autism will learn more easily, express more interest and have fewer behaviour problems if there is predictability to their daily and weekly routines”

- Olley, 1984



Brushing Teeth

1

wet toothbrush



2

toothpaste on brush



3

brush teeth



4

spit in sink



5

rinse toothbrush



Using the Toilet



1

Pants down



2

Sit on the toilet



3

Wait till done



4

Use the toilet paper



5

Flush the toilet



6

Wash your hands



7

Pants up



Structure

- Structure is providing predictability and visual organisation to the physical environment whilst reducing unnecessary distraction.
- Also includes visual structure of tasks:
 - Visual instructions
 - Visual organisation
 - Visual clarity





Name _____

Adjectives

Grammar Worksheet

Adjectives

Circle the adjectives in the sentences below. Then underline the noun it describes.

1. Sandy picked the pink roses.
2. A tiny spider crawled up the wall.
3. Alex wiped his dirty hands.
4. Tomorrow is going to be a hot day!
5. We looked up at the tall building.

| | | | | | |
|-------|--|--|--|--|--|
| 9:00 | Maths Classroom 2A | Physics LAB1 Tue 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM | Biology LAB1 Wed 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM | Biology LAB1 Thu 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM | Maths Classroom 2A |
| 10:00 | Sport Gym 2 Mon 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM | | | | Biology LAB A.1 Fri 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM |
| 11:00 | | Biology LAB2 | Sport Gym 2 | English LANG BUILD. A2 | |
| 12:00 | Spanish LANG BUILD. A2 | Chemistry Classroom 1 | Physics LAB 1 | Math Classroom 2A | Chemistry Classroom 2A |
| 13:00 | Philosophy Classroom 3 | English LANG BUILD. A2 | Math Classroom 2A | Physics LAB 1 | Biology LAB A.2 |
| 14:00 | | | | | |

Targeted Sensory Supports

Examples of targeted sensory equipment:

- Headphones for someone who is noise sensitive
- Chewy tube for someone who is mouthing cloth
- Trampoline for someone who needs whole body movement input
- Air cushion for someone who needs movement whilst sitting



Use of Special Interests



Thank you 😊