

Paraprofessional Guide for Instruction

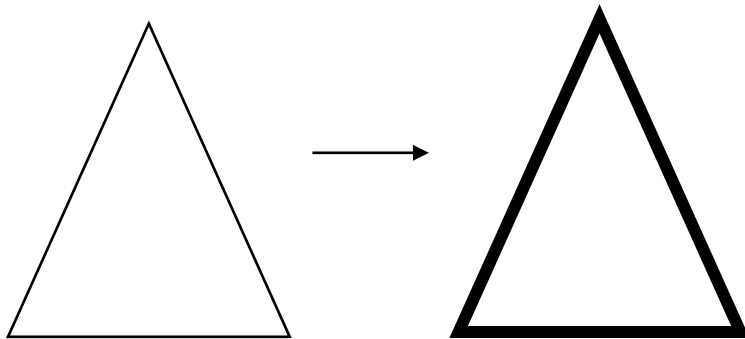
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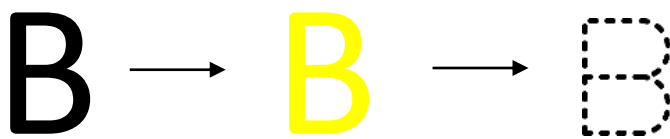
Learning Strategies

- **The overall goal is to encourage student to gain self-efficacy and independence.**
- Explain instructions via:
 - Verbalization
 - Visual prompts and cues
 - Demonstration
- Ask higher level questions and encourage feedback during task completion to guide student towards success
 - “How could you do it differently?”
 - “Why did that happen?”
 - “What might be the problem here?”
 - “Let’s check to see if you wrote the words correctly...”
- Provide physical prompts
 - Point to each word during reading
- Provide think aloud modeling
 - “What can you do to remember the correct way to write letter ‘b’?”
- Encourage self-coaching and verbalization strategies
 - Use mnemonics and rehearsal during letter formation
- Provide visual cues and prompts
 - Write letter in yellow highlighter and have student trace or copy letter
 - Make line darker or thicker during cutting activities
- Provide visual that shows outcomes of making certain choices
 - On-track vs. off-track choices
 - Coping strategies
- Modify task based on students’ needs
 - Break down task step-by-step or into components
 - Eliminate answer choices
 - Limit number of choices in multiple-choice questions
- Create goal with student and allow for self-correction
 - Goal: “What do you want to do?”
 - Plan: “How are you going to do it?”
 - Do: “Do it!”
 - Check: “Let’s check your work. Do you need to change anything?”

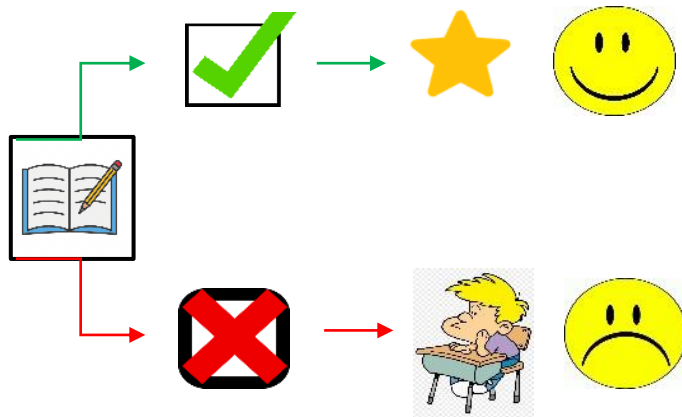
Make line darker



Visual prompts for letter formation



Make a choice



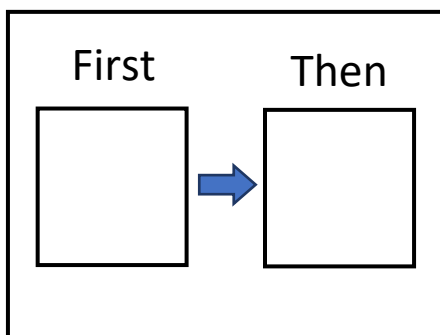
Attention and Focus

- **Provide support to the child via visual aids or environmental adaptations to increase attention and focus.**

- Interventions:

- First, then
 - Verbal or visual aid to show order of tasks
- Countdown
 - Give verbal countdown
 - Show visual timer
- Visual schedules
 - Use check mark to show completion of each task
- Make a choice
 - Show outcome of on-track vs. off-track choices
- Token system
 - Receive star for each good choice made
 - Receive reward or break after 5 stars
 - Adjust expectation of star received based on students' needs, tolerance of workload, etc.
- Promote organizational skills with personal belongings
 - Reduce or minimize clutter surrounding workspace
- Fold worksheets to reduce overwhelming of text and increase focus on certain sections
- Point to each word during reading activities
- Place seat away from door or environmental distractions
- Wear noise-reducing headphones to avoid environmental distractions
- Provide quiet room or space to do work if necessary
- Incorporate movement breaks between tasks, subjects, etc. (See Movement Breaks)
- Allow fidgets as necessary (i.e., during classroom lecture or listening activities)
 - Put Velcro under desk or on binder

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Routines

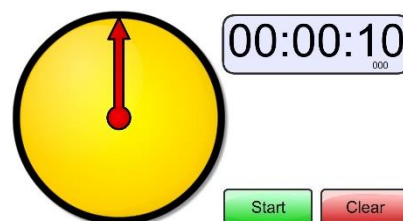
- **Routines provide structure, normalcy, predictability, expectations, order, and comfort.**
- **Understand that change in routine can result in changed behaviors.**
- Interventions:
 - Visual/picture schedules
 - Use check mark to show completion of each task
 - First, then
 - Verbal or visual aid to show order of tasks
 - Communicate with child if known change to routine and schedule
 - Reminders
 - Communicate with parent of known change (i.e., substitute) to increase child's preparedness
 - Provide flashcard to substitute paraprofessional/teacher with child's strengths, weaknesses, interests, and disinterests

Flashcard

Name: _____
Strengths: _____
Weaknesses: _____
Interests: _____
Disinterests: _____

Transitions

- **Switching from one setting or task to another can be difficult for some students.**
- **The overall goal is to provide ease with transitions.**
- Interventions:
 - First, then
 - Verbal or visual aid to show order of tasks
 - Countdown
 - Give verbal countdown
 - Show visual timer
 - Visual schedules
 - Use check mark to show completion of each task
 - Make a choice
 - Show outcome of on-track vs. off-track choices
 - Token system
 - Receive star for each good choice made
 - Receive reward or break after 5 stars
 - Adjust expectation of star received based on students' needs, tolerance of workload, etc.



Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

- **SEL is defined as “the process of acquiring the skills to recognize and manage emotions, develop caring and concern for others, make responsible decisions, establish positive relationships, and handle challenging situations effectively.”**
- **Emotions can impede or enhance success during learning.**
- Interventions:
 - Establish trust and boundaries
 - Consistency
 - Give students meaningful classroom jobs or tasks
 - Give praise and positive feedback
 - Show outcomes for making a choice: on-track vs. off-track choices
 - Validate their feelings
 - Allow them to express their feelings and why
 - Help them understand what they are feeling and why
 - Behavior=form of communication
 - Tune into student’s feelings daily by asking: “how’s your day going?” or “how are you feeling?”
 - Ask them at the end of the day to reflect on one thing they learned, made them happy, or made them sad
 - Create brag bracelet: on piece of paper, have them write about one great thing that happened so they can show their parents
 - Foster the ability to take the perspective of, recognize, and respond to other’s emotions
 - Alter student’s work according to student’s needs and appropriate accommodations to increase their sense of self-efficacy and confidence
 - Promote independence with daily living skills and activities throughout school day
 - Promote development of strategies for time management and organizing workspace
 - Promote positive ways to handle stressful situations
 - Help set goals and show progression

Sensory Processing

- Sensory deficits can inhibit ability to focus and lead to behaviors.
- Consult with the OTs to determine if there is in fact an underlying sensory concern.
 - It may be difficult to decipher whether the behavior results from sensory deficit vs. tantrum behavior.
 - See chart below.

Auditory: Hearing



Hyper-responsive	Hypo-responsive
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overreacts to ordinary sounds• Easily distracted in noisy environment• Becomes agitated at sudden noises or when noise volume increases• Covers ears for alarms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does not hear or under reacts• Fails to respond when name called (though hearing is normal)• Makes loud noises in quiet settings• Enjoys loud noises• Difficulty following verbal directions
<u>Interventions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wear noise reducing headphones to avoid distractions from environment<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ During classwork, school assemblies, music special, fire drills, recess, etc.• Provide quiet room or space to do work• Minimize verbal directions; provide visual directions• Place seat away from door or other distractions• Calming music (i.e., water fountain, spa, or nature) during classwork	

Gustatory/Olfactory: Taste/Smell



Hyper-responsive	Hypo-responsive
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gags or vomits in response to certain smells• Refuses to use utensils	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chews on clothing, pencil, or various items in class• Bites others• Displays constant movements of mouth (i.e., moving tongue, tapping teeth, rubbing lips)• Frequently makes mouth noises (i.e., clicking, buzzing, humming)
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Interventions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use chewable jewelry/tubing or put tubing over pencil• Place vibrating/batter-operated toothbrush or toys near cheeks• Blow bubbles• Provide crunchy snacks at snack time• Use a straw for drink• Take deep breaths in and out slowly• Provide scented pencils, markers, or highlighters<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Calming scents- vanilla, rose, and lavender○ Alerting scents- citrus (i.e., lemon and orange) and peppermint	



Visual: Sight



Atypical Responses

- Easily distracted by visual stimulation
- Easily distracted by classroom decorations
- Difficulty visually focusing while completing worksheet
- Sensitivity to light
- Focuses on shiny items
- Finger flicking
- Obsessed with pouring sand/rice/repetitive motions

Interventions

- Limit distractions on walls nearby child
- Sensory bottles
- Visual schedules or written directions
- Reduce or minimize clutter
- Fold worksheets to reduce overwhelming of text and increase focus on certain sections
- Point to each word during reading activities



Tactile: Touch



Hyper-responsive	Hypo-responsive
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoids messy textures and touch (i.e., glue or paint)• Avoids grooming activities (i.e., hand washing)• Avoids physical contact or touching (i.e., hand on shoulder)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decreased awareness of touch (i.e., clothing is twisted after using restroom)• Increased need to touch everything (i.e., craving hugs, closeness with others, fidgets with objects, seeks out textures)• Lacks awareness when hands/face are messy
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Interventions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce certain textures gradually• Respect personal space• Allow personal clothing choices• Put Velcro under desk or on binder to increase focus during work or listening	



Vestibular

Body Balance and Movement

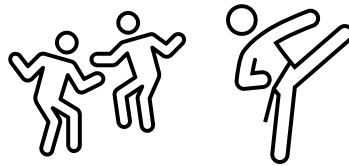


Hyper-responsive	Hypo-responsive
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Balance challenges• Clumsiness• Tendency to slump/slouch/lean on desk or walls in highway• Fear of swings/stairs/slides	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enjoys spinning and lacks dizziness feeling• Enjoys excessive movement• Appears fidgety
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Interventions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Functional movement breaks (i.e., classroom tasks- wipe tables or under chairs, move chairs, or deliver note to teacher)• Jumping jacks or on trampoline• Swinging• Yoga• Tuck knees into chest and rock back and forth• Bounce on ball	

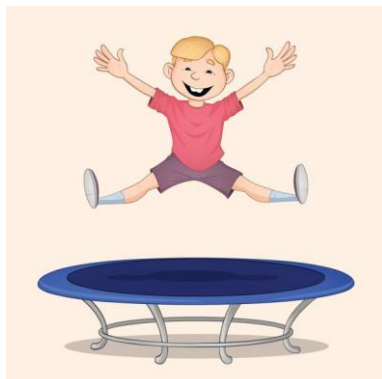


Proprioception

Body Awareness; Position, Balance, Orientation, and Movement of Body

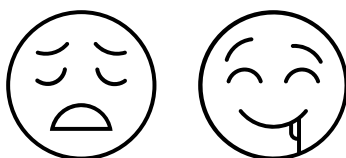


Difficulty grading pressure	Seeks additional proprioceptive input
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presses too hard or too soft when writing or coloring• Breaks toys• Slams doors• Uses aggressive/excessive force	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grinds teeth, chews on objects• Walks on toes• Crashes into objects or floor• Pushes others/plays aggressively• Appears tired or sluggish (i.e., slumping or leaning)
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Interventions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete prior to tasks requiring increased attention and focus• Heavy work tasks (i.e., wipe tables, move chairs, move/deliver books, push a cart, pull wagon)• Functional movement breaks• Obstacle courses• Bounce on ball• Hopscotch• Sharpen pencils• Roll, pinch, pull playdoh or putty• Jumping jacks or on trampoline• Wall pushups	



Interoception

Body's Internal Sensations; Feelings and Emotions

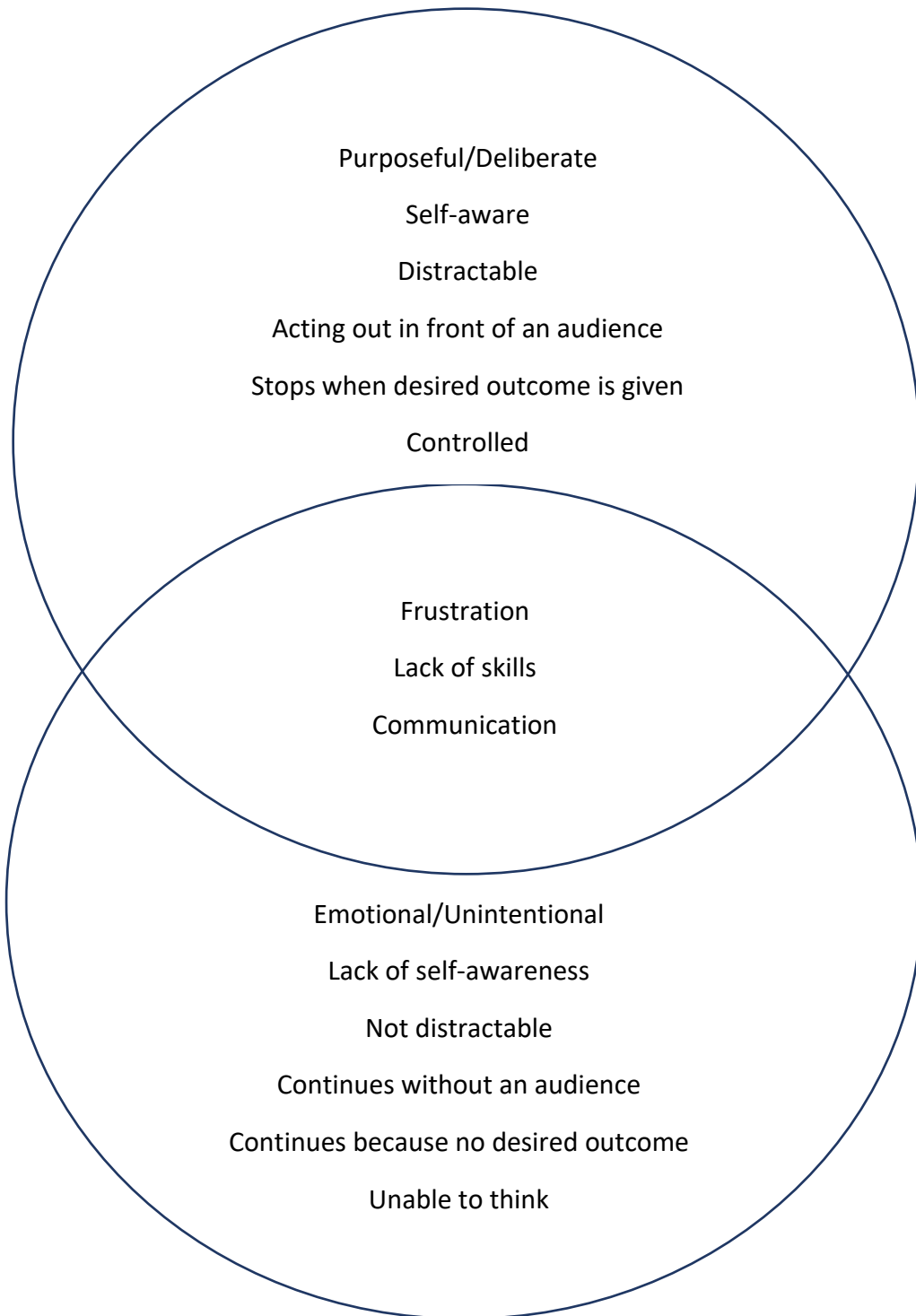


- The sense that helps with understanding our body's needs and regulating emotions, as emotions can be linked to physical sensations.
 - Anxious feeling: increased heart rate, dry mouth, and sweating
 - Hunger feeling: rumbling stomach and shakiness
 - Using the bathroom: full bladder
 - Hot feeling: warm body, increased heart rate, and thirsty sensation
 - Tired feeling: energy level drops and slower movements
- Interoception helps a person understand the physical sensations and learn how to regulate emotions effectively.
 - Anxious feeling: deep breathing or go for a walk
 - Hunger feeling: eat a snack
 - Using the bathroom: go to the bathroom
 - Hot feeling: drink cold water, find shade, or go inside
 - Tired feeling: slow down, take a break, take a nap, or move around
- Interoceptive issues result from the inability to understand the body's internal needs and signals, therefore leading to difficulty with regulating emotions/feelings and energy levels effectively.

Interventions

- Teach words for internal feelings
- Use visual chart to help communicate feelings/emotions and ways to meet bodily needs
- Use mindfulness activities
- Encourage expressing of internal feelings
 - Say "I feel hungry" at lunchtime
- Create routine and schedule of using bathroom
 - After recess
 - After snack time
- Incorporate proprioceptive activities and functional movement breaks throughout the day

Tantrum



Sensory Meltdown

Movement Breaks

- **Movement breaks can help to increase focus and attention.**
- Roll, pinch, and pull playdoh or putty
- Kinetic sand
- Squeeze/play with squishy balls, fidgets, or vibrating toys
- Hopscotch
- Jumping jacks
- Animal walks (walk on knees, crab walk, bear walk, frog jumps)
- Sensory hallway
- Trampoline
- Carry heavy backpack while taking a walk
- Give student a job throughout classroom
 - Erase boards
 - Reorganize shelves
 - Wash desks or tables
 - Move crates, boxes, desks, etc.
 - Deliver notes to office
 - Clean under chairs or desks
 - Stack chairs or place chairs on desks at end of day
 - Broom
 - Sharpen pencils with manual sharpener
 - Carry/move heavy books to alternative place in room

Handwriting

- Prewriting/proprioceptive activities
 - Shaving cream
 - Wash desk
 - Roll playdoh
 - Desk/seat pushups
- Motivating techniques:
 - Various colored paper
 - Scented pencils, markers, or highlighters
 - Fun erasers
- Fold paper to reduce overwhelming of text
- Promote social interaction via writing letters to friends

Letter and number formation

- Say the motion of the letter out loud with silly gestures
- Use dots at different points for visual cues
- Use arrows as visual cues for consistent formation
- Trace and copy letters
- Play tic-tac-toe with newly learned letters (instead of X and O)
- Allow child to review and self-correct their handwriting
 - Compare correctly written letter versus child's written letter
- Change writing surface
 - Write on vertical surface (example: chalkboard, whiteboard, or paper on wall)
 - Write on slanted surface (example: binder or table on incline)
- Use phone or iPad apps, such as Letterschool app (free)
- Attach an alphabet strip to the top of the writing surface
- Multisensory activities
 - Form letters using shaving cream, sand, playdoh, beads, pipe cleaners, or popsicle sticks

Spacing between words

- Use index finger for spacing
- Use fingerprint spacing by pressing on an inepad
- Use small post-it notes or popsicle stick as spacers

Spacing on paper

- Use grid paper or any lined paper
- Write on every other line of the paper

Placing text on lines

- Use raised writing lines as tactile cues for letter placement
- Remind child that unevenly placed letters are “popcorn letters” or “floating letters”
- Highlight top, middle, and bottom lines with different colors for cues

Sizing letters and words

- Use individualized boxes for each letter or word
- Name letters with ascending stems, descending stems, and no stems

Forming words and sentences

- Allow child to review and self-correct their handwriting
- Use a written checklist for spacing, sizing, alignment, and letter formation

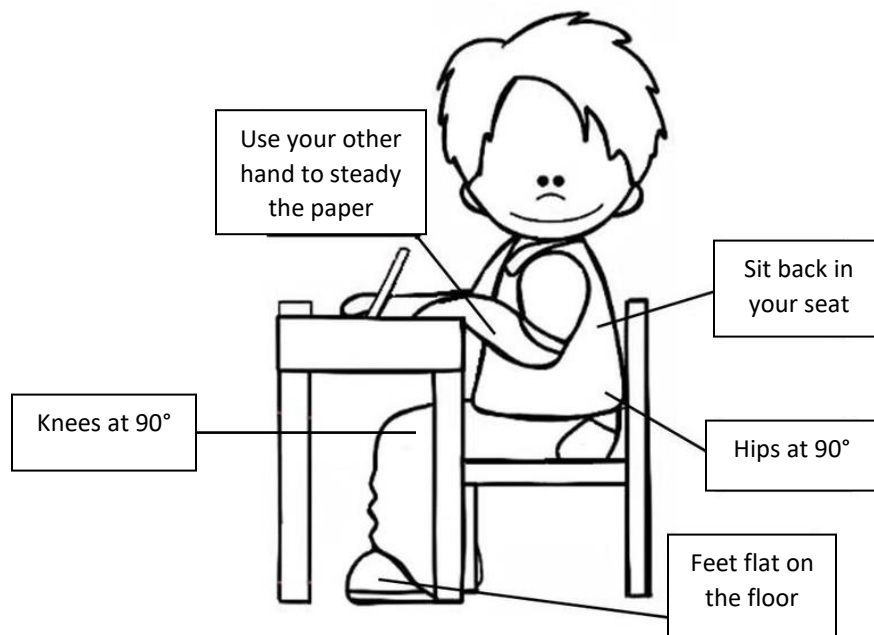
Posture

- Core strengthening activities
- Flexible seating (example: sit on big exercise ball versus chair)
- Stand while writing on vertical surface

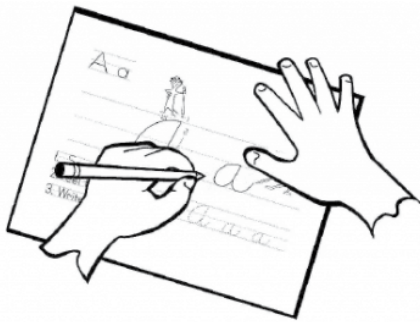
Regulation of pressure

- Place paper on cardboard or sandpaper while writing
- Place hands on sides of chair and rock side to side for 45 seconds before writing
- Use writing utensil with larger diameter
- Wearing wrist weights during handwriting

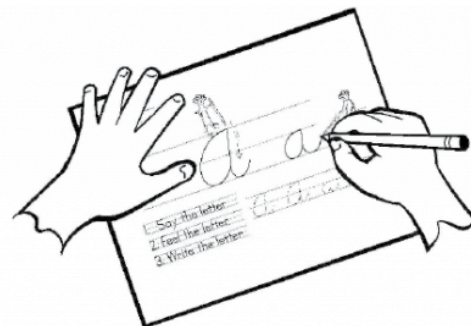
Body Posture



Paper Position



Left-handed writers:
paper should be tilted
30°- 35° to the right



Right-handed writers:
paper should be tilted
25°- 30° to the left

Additional Resources

Mindfulness, yoga, and relaxation approaches:

<http://yoga4classrooms.org/>

Paraprofessional training- The Autism Helper:

<https://theautismhelper.com/paraprofessional-training/>

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports:

<https://www.pbis.org/>

Social and emotional learning standards and activities in state of IL:

<https://www.readyrosie.com/standards/ill-sel/>

Social and emotional learning activities throughout school day:

<https://everymomentcounts.org/>

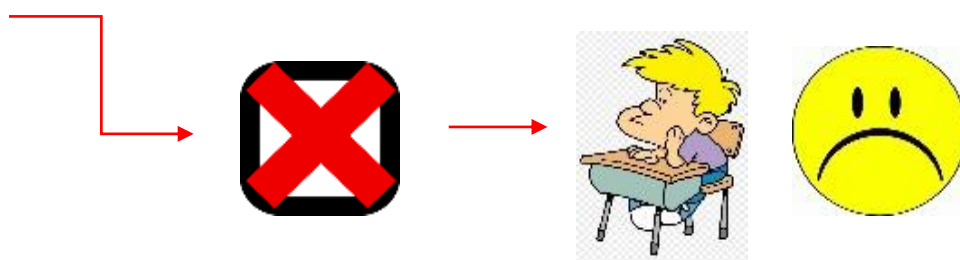
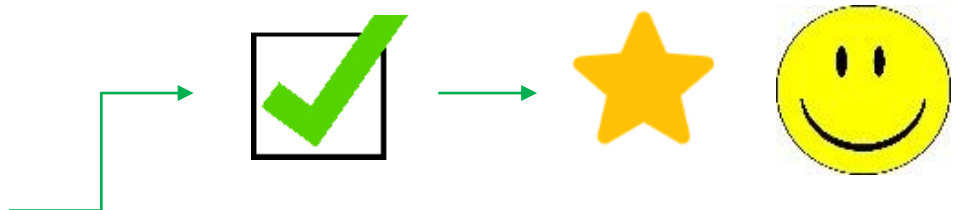
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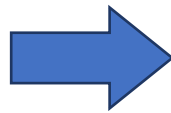
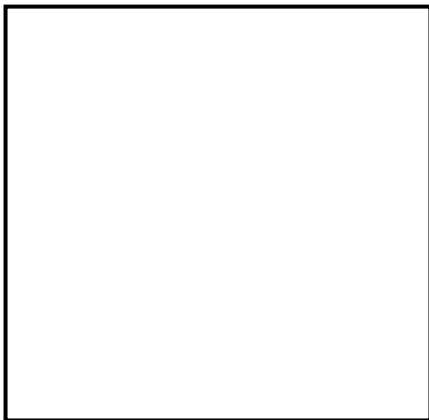
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Pictures

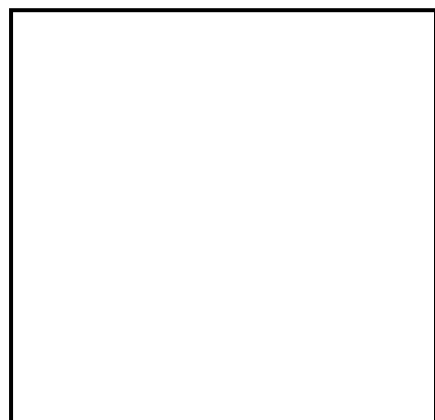
- <https://www.walmart.com/ip/time-timer-original-12-inch-60-minute-visual-timer-classroom-or-meeting-countdown-clock-for-kids-and-adults-black/101751567>
- <https://www.online-stopwatch.com/classroom-timers/>
- <http://www.letstalkspeechlanguage.com/2012/06/resource-of-week.html>
- [Bite Saber Pencil Topper - Hippo Hug Inc - Stylish Chews and Chewelry](#)
- [vibrating toys for sensory kids - Bing images](#)
- [Fringy Fidgets™ \(for under your desk\) | Anxiety and Stress Reducers | Fringy Fidgets™ \(for under your desk\) from Therapy Shoppe Silent Fidget-Fiddle-Tool-Toy | Classroom, Sensory, Office, Desk Toy-Fidget-Figit](#)
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First



Then



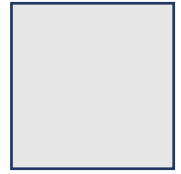
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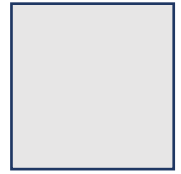
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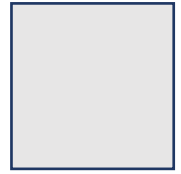
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4



5



I am working for:



Name: _____

Strengths: _____

Weaknesses: _____

Interests: _____

Disinterests: _____
