Inclusive Supports for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

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Welcome!

By the end of the session, you will be able to:

- Identify and use elements of classroom structure that will assist most students, including those with and without autism
- Find ways to incorporate 5 key student supports into your classroom
- Identify supports available to help you brainstorm, solve problems, and plan

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What is Autism Spectrum Disorder?

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

- Is a developmental disorder that impacts the way individuals interpret their environment, often resulting in challenges with social interactions and processing information.

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DSM ASD Criteria

- Persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across contexts
- Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities
  - Stereotyped or repetitive motor movements,
  - Insistence on sameness, inflexible adherence to routines, or ritualized patterns of verbal or nonverbal behavior
  - Highly restricted, fixated interests that are abnormal in intensity or focus
  - Hyper- or hypo-reactivity to sensory input or unusual interests
- Symptoms must be present in early childhood
- Symptoms cause clinically significant impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of current functioning

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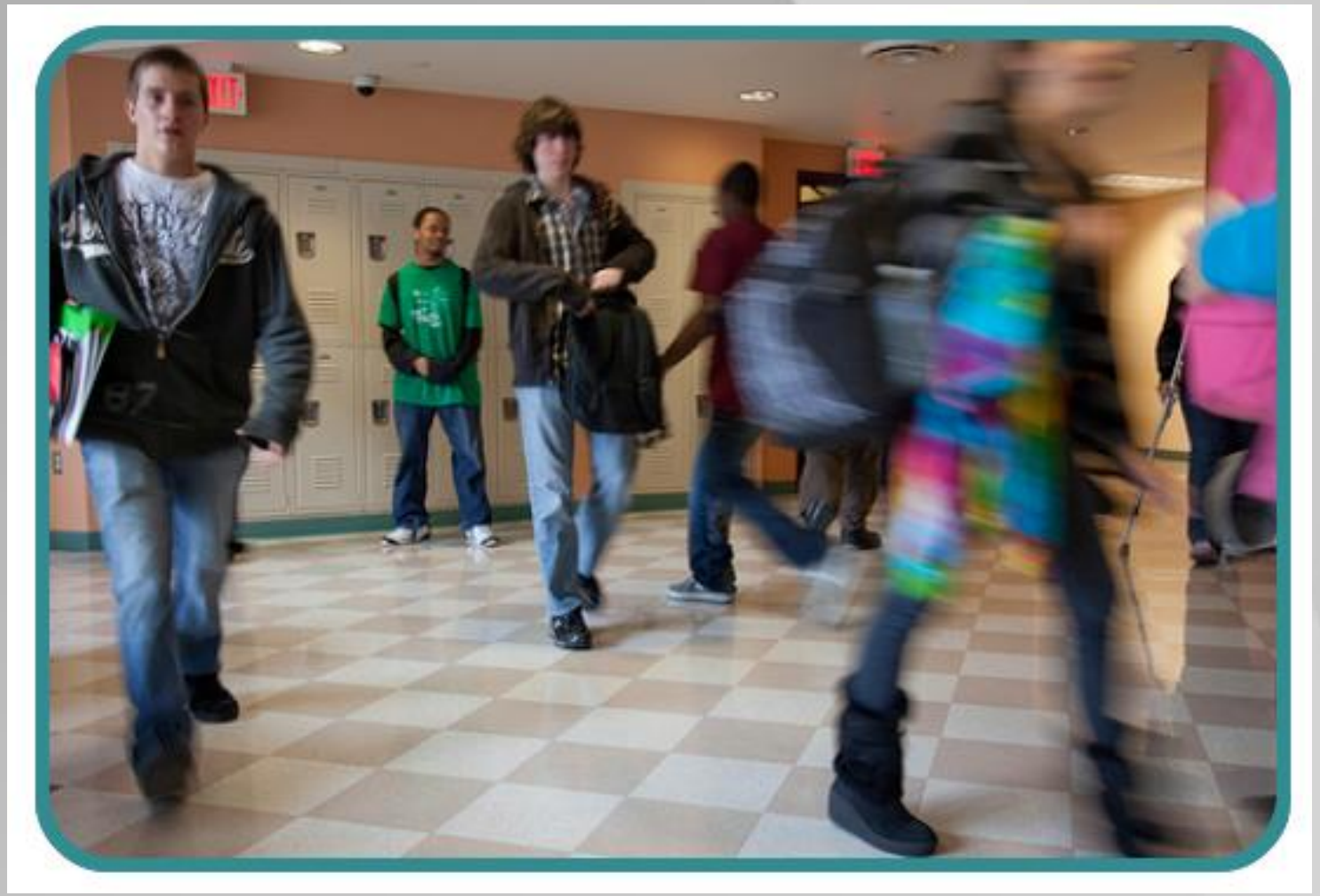
Strategies for Classroom Success



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School Environment Challenges

Transitions

- Require multiple changes
- Predictable and yet still unpredictable

Sights and sounds of hallways

- Noise and commotion can be overwhelming
- After navigating the hallways, students are often stressed and unsettled

Students with ASD often have difficulty

- picking out important information from the environment & understanding what they are supposed to do.

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Think About This

- What are the aspects of your school that may make it a challenging environment for students with ASD?
- Write down 5 examples

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How can you support support students with ASD in your classroom and school?

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Structure is Key

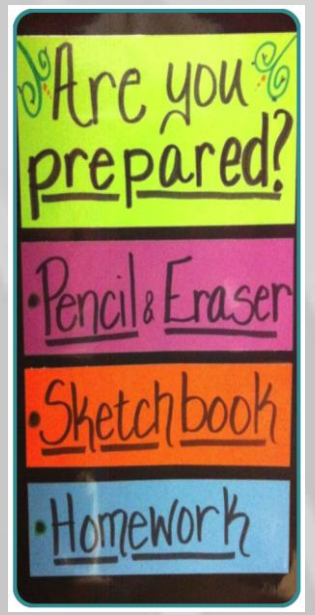
Make information accessible

Spell out where homework goes and where to get materials

Provide structure

- Make task expectations clear

Create a predictable classroom



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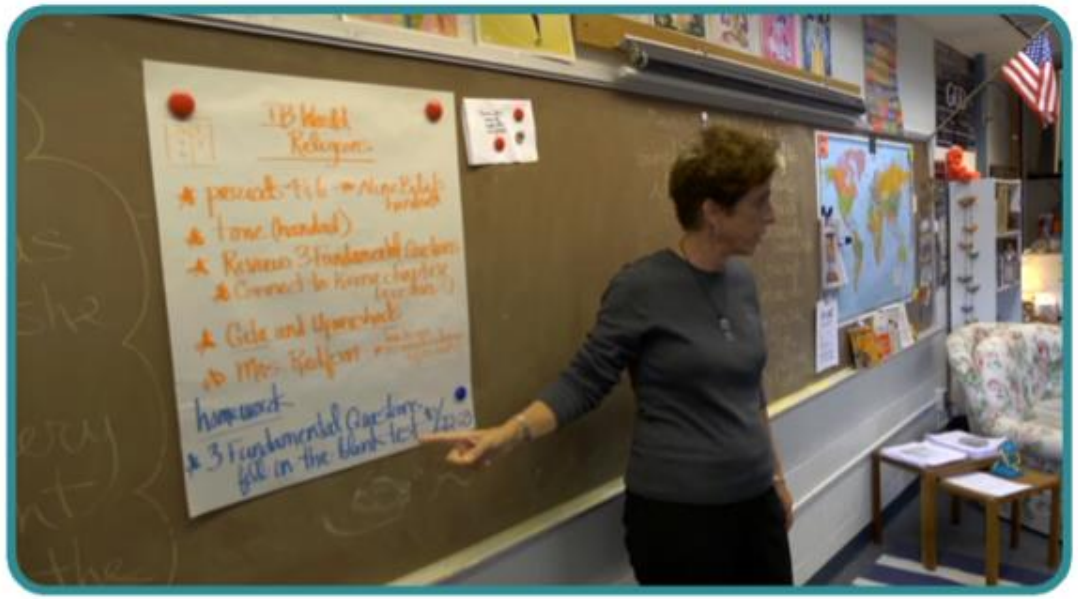
Classroom Supports



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Hypersensitivities

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Consider potential auditory and visual challenges

Sitting too close to:

- windows
- hallway door
- specific students

Radio playing

Messages flickering on TV screen

Fluorescent lights

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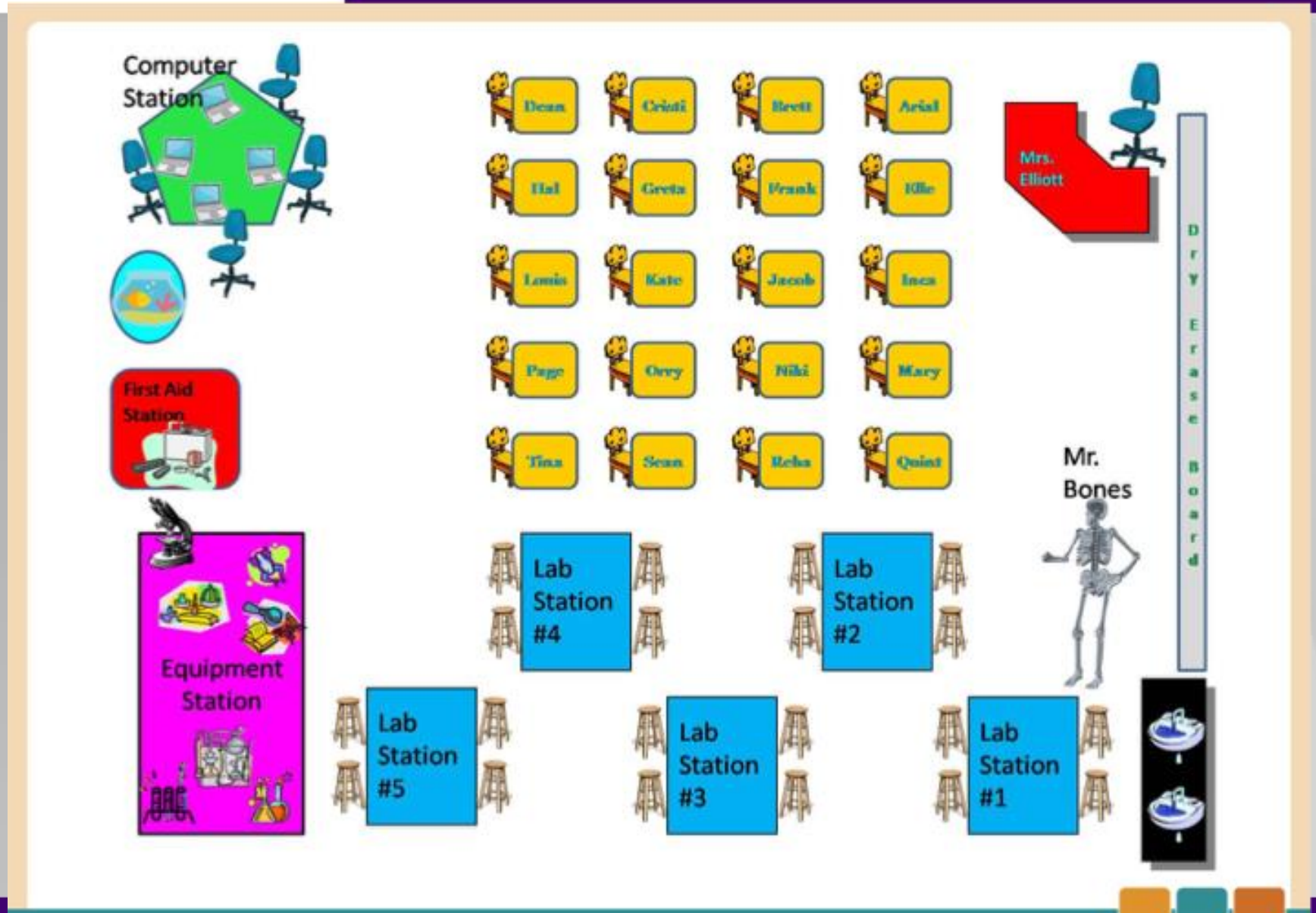

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5 Key Support Strategies

- Priming
- Academic Modifications
- Visual Supports
- Reinforcement
- Home Base

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Priming

Priming is exposure to academic course material or tasks **before** instruction.

It gives students the chance to become familiar with the material or skills, and increases the likelihood they will learn and use key concepts

- Priming is most effective when it is built into the student's daily routine

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What does priming look like?

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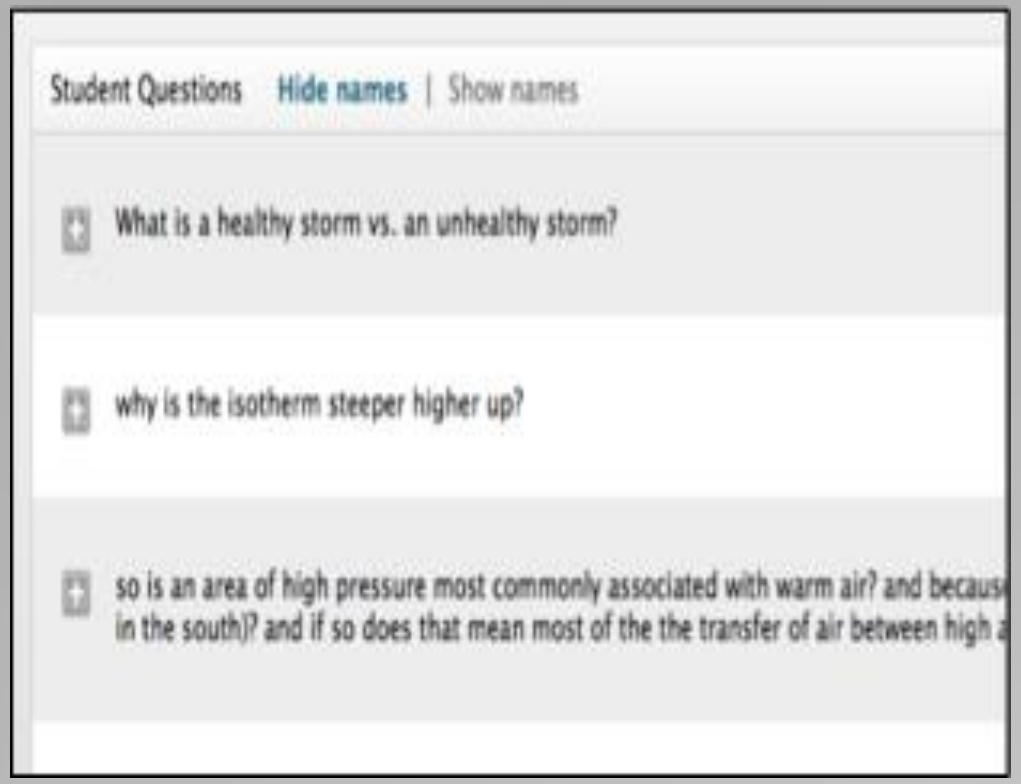
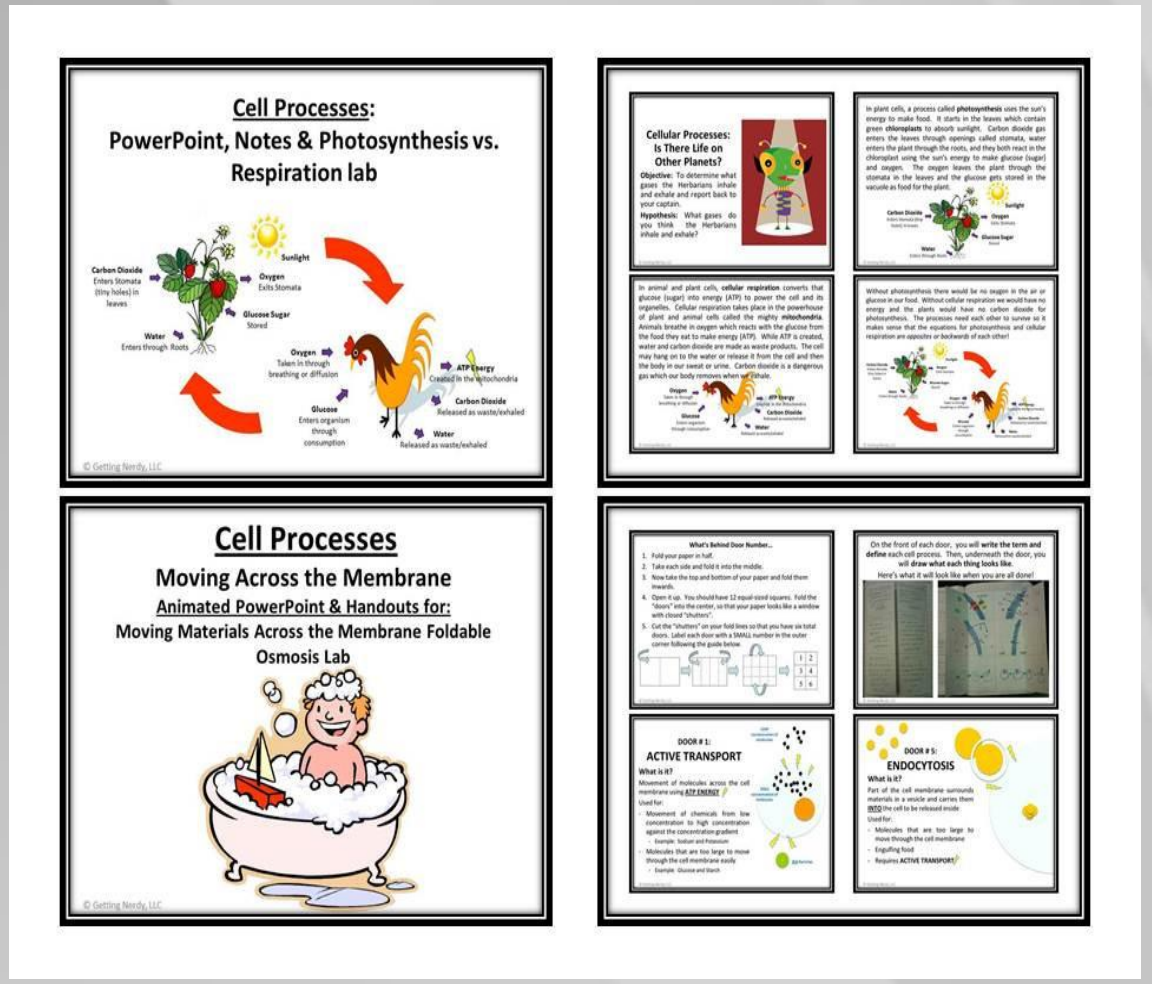
What does priming look like?





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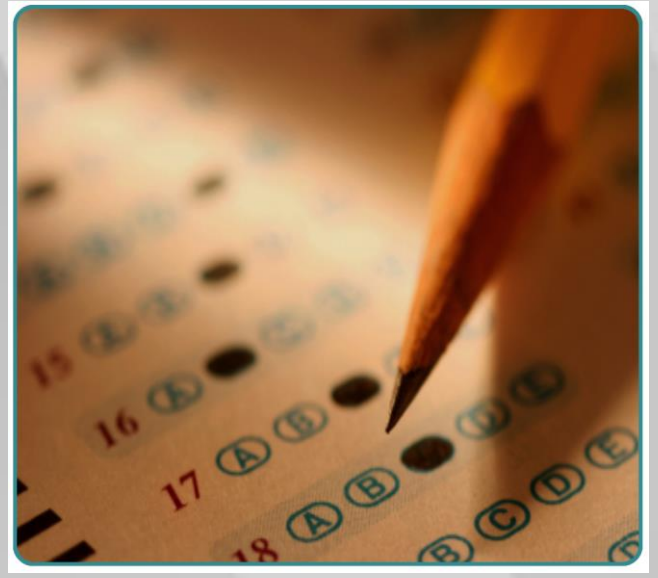
Academic Modifications

When the content or format of assignments are adapted to meet the student's specific needs

Examples:

- Read directions out loud
- Extended time on assignments
- IEP at a glance/cheat sheet can be useful to communicate academic modifications



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At My School

- How do I know if my student needs academic modifications?
  - Who do I ask?
- Where are student Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)?

  - Where in an IEP do I find information on academic modifications?

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Visual Supports

Any tool presented visually

Visual supports might include:

- Pictures
- Written words
- Objects within the environment
- Visual boundaries
- Schedules
- Maps
- Labels
- Organization systems
- Timelines
- Scripts

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Study Guides

Story

"Divorced, **beheaded**, died; divorced, beheaded, survived" is a rhyme that helps people remember the fates of six former queens. Who were these queens, and why do people remember them? For centuries, people have been fascinated with these six women for their mutual husband, the infamous 16th century English King Henry VIII. Henry's six wives are interesting not only because there were so many of them, but also because they testify to the most important aspect of his **regime**: Henry VIII was a ruler who wasn't afraid of change.

Henry's six-wife saga began with Catherine of Aragon, who after years of trying, was unable to bear Henry a son. This failure, as Henry saw it, along with Henry's increasing infatuation with Anne Boleyn, a woman in his court, eventually led Henry to divorce Catherine and marry Anne. Soon, Anne became too grouchy for his taste, and Henry promptly had her **beheaded**. He went through the rest of his wives quickly, divorcing Anne of Cleves because he found her too ugly and recklessly beheading the 16-year-old Katherine Howard.

Henry's offensive habit of discarding wives may seem merely anecdotal, but it actually brought about a major change in England. During Henry's first marriage, England was a Catholic country, and divorce was therefore forbidden. When the Church refused to grant Henry the divorce he wanted, he broke ties with Roman Catholicism and formed the Church of England. Henry declared himself supreme head of this church and granted himself a divorce. This **unprecedented** move made him ruler of both religious and political matters. Henry's bold declaration was the first step in England's transformation from a medieval, Catholic country into a **Protestant** country with a more modern social structure. Provoking this change, which later became known as the English Reformation, was the largest milestone in Henry VIII's career. It was also one of the biggest changes England has ever seen.

Though history probably could have done without a few of Henry's impulsive wife changes, he nonetheless made a significant and lasting change in England. For that radical step—in addition to his six wives—King Henry VIII will forever be remembered.

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Provide study guides that highlight the main points of the lesson

- Highlight key parts of the text

Highlighted text tells students when to stop reading and begin working on comprehension questions.

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Visual supports can also be

- Self-management tools that help the student stay focused and understand their behavior
- Graphic organizers that help the student highlight important information
- Social scripts that help the student understand what to say or how to act in particular situations

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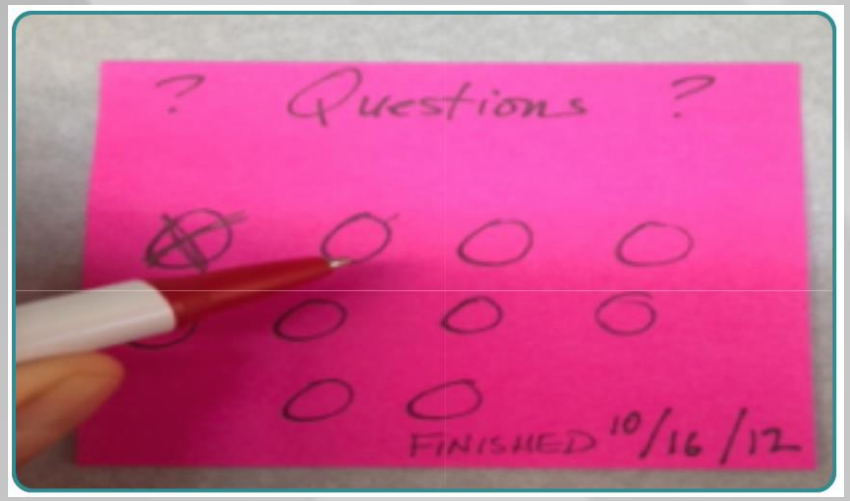
Self Management

- [ ] I have remembered to include a clear and lively opening.
- [ ] I have included a suitable problem.
- [ ] I have created a balanced ending to my story.
- [ ] I have used capital letters at the start of my sentences and for people's names.
- [ ] I remembered to put full stops at the end of my sentences.
- [ ] I have included what the character would see, hear, smell, feel and taste



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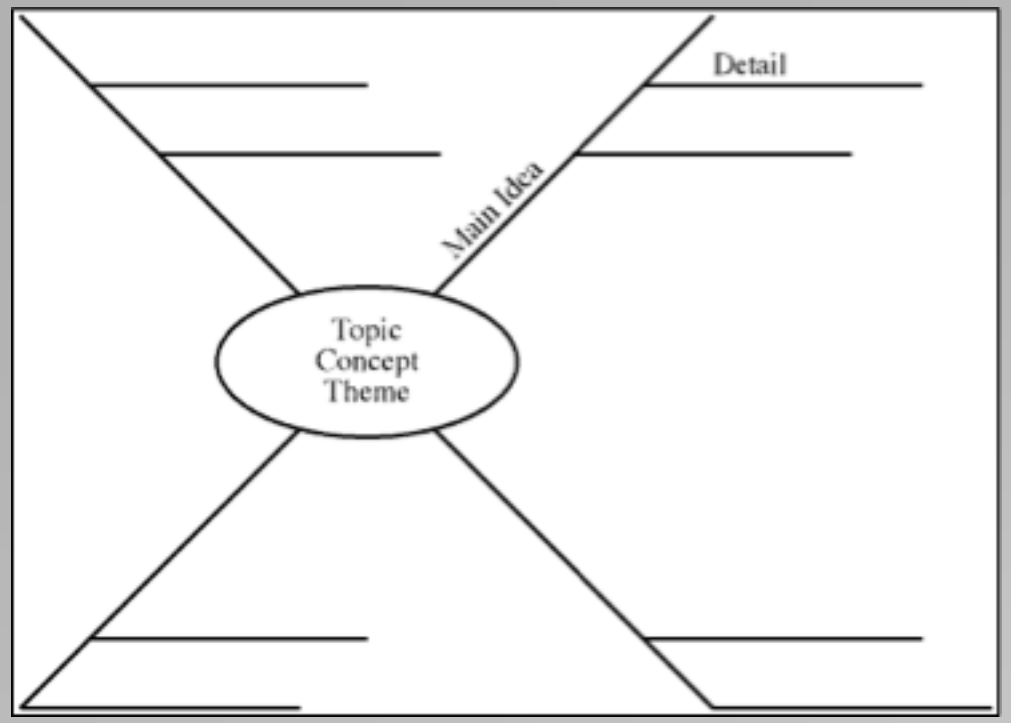
Graphic Organizers



2. After Class: Edit and summarize here.	1. During Class: Take notes here.	3. Later: Your ideas, thoughts, questions here.

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Visual for a social script

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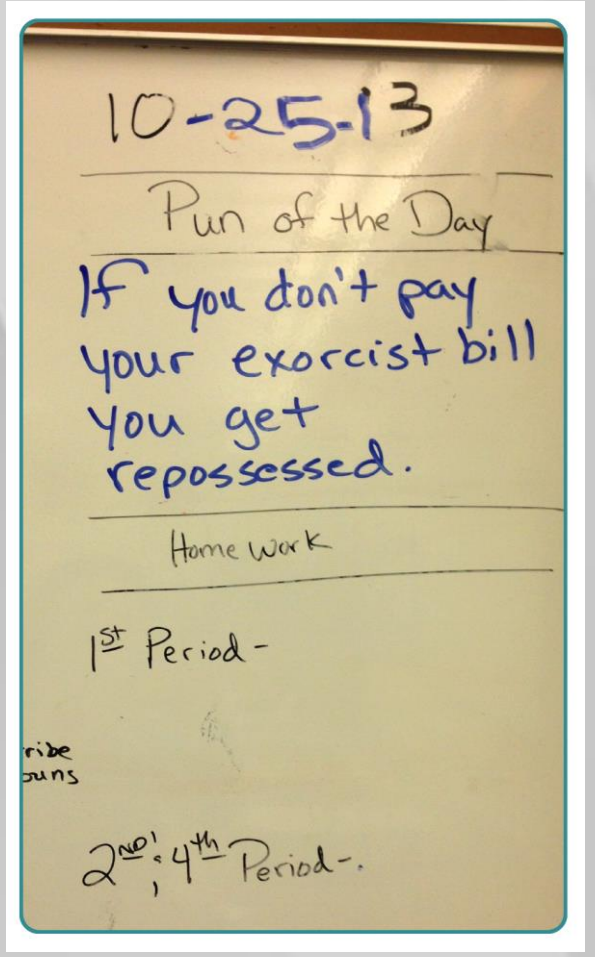
Visuals help everyone learn!



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Integrating Supports

- Printed schedules
- Graphic organizers
- Social script
- Video modeling or self modeling linked to a self monitoring system
- https://hml.fpg.unc.edu/flash/11449604_hi.mp4

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Reinforcement

Rewards students for behaving in ways that are productive and support their continued growth

- Verbal praise
- Computer time
- Homework pass
- *A teenager with ASD may need to be reinforced for things that others do not need to be reinforced.*

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Reinforcement

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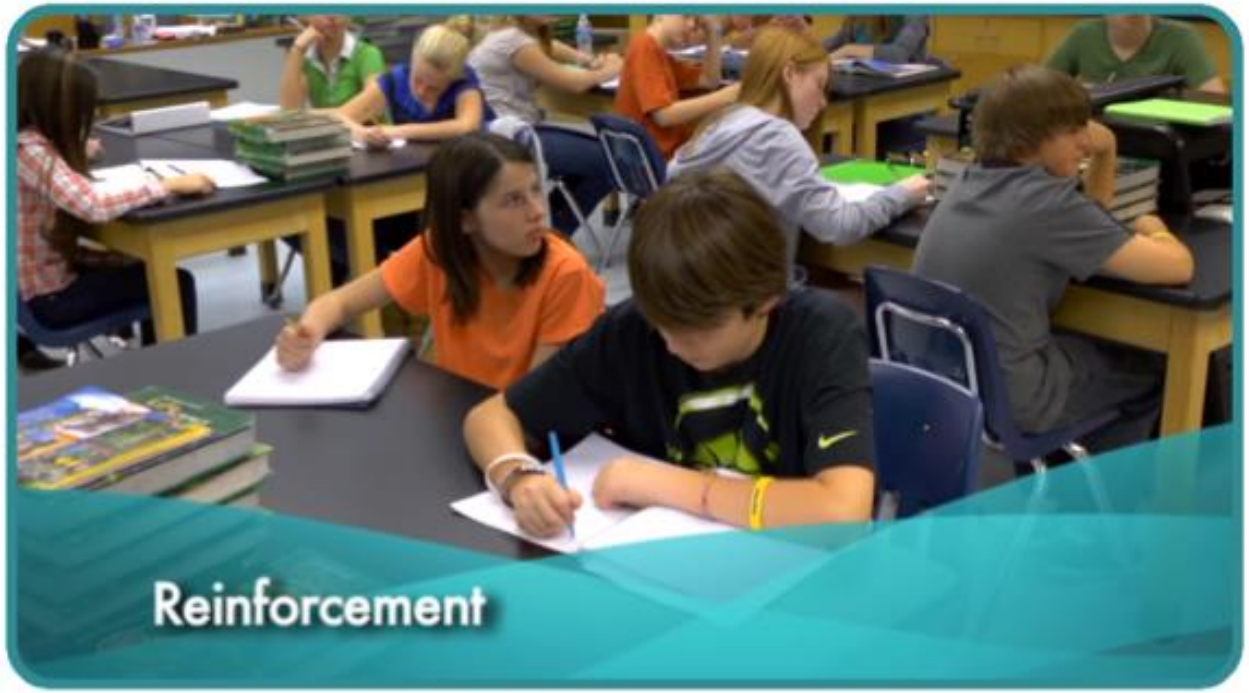

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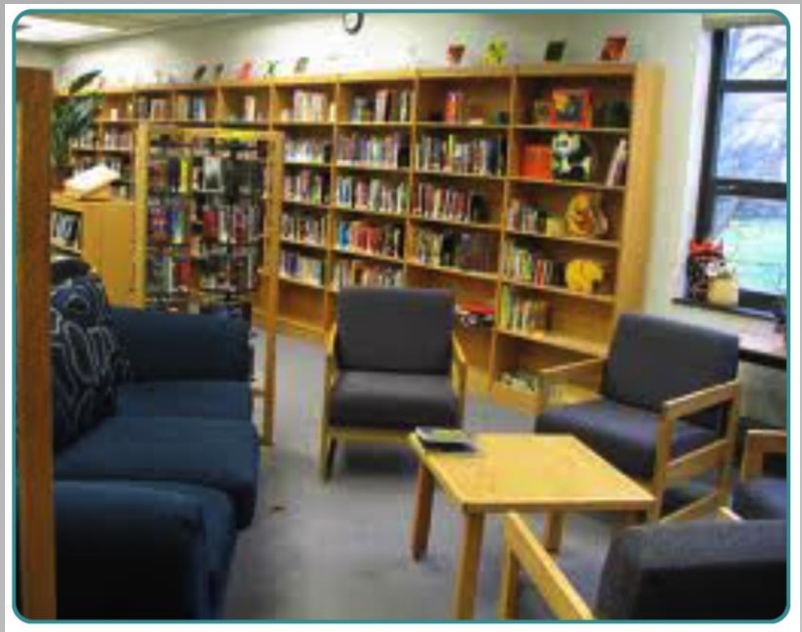
Home Base

Designated place students with ASD can go to regain control in times of stress



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More Strategies

- For other evidence-based strategies to support students with ASD visit The National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorder
- https://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/evidence-based-practices

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Effective Use of Teacher Supports

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Where Can You Turn?

- Three primary supports can enhance your efforts when working with students with ASD:
  - The Individualized Education Program (IEP)
  - Special education teachers
  - Paraprofessionals
- If you feel your student needs supports identify your school's key contact for beginning process of acquiring additional supports

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The IEP

Goal Description

Given a topic, Luke will write a well formulated paragraph, with a topic sentence, two or more supporting sentences, and closure statement, with 80% accuracy.

Does the student require assistive technology devices and /or services? No

If yes, describe needs:

(Address after determination of related services.) Is this goal integrated with related service(s)? No

*** If yes, list the related service area(s) of integration:**

Benchmarks or Short Term Objectives (if applicable)

(Required for students participating in the state alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards)

1. Luke will write two topic sentences, with correct capitialization, and correct punctuation, iwith 85% accuracy.

2. Luke will write a response paragraph to teacher directed questioning assessment in his general education classes, with 85% accuracy.

Describe how progress toward the annual goal will be measured

Teacher made tests; Report card in Writing Intense Courses (English/Social Studies)

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The IEP

- The IEP is the central document that serves as the student's roadmap to education
- It lays out student's present skills and skills that teachers should work with the student to improve, including academic and non-academic goals
- It structures the learning process for students with ASD and other special needs to ensure they are reaching their full potential

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Special Education Teachers

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Special Education Teachers

- The special education teacher is the guide to the student's disability and IEP
- Special education teachers help monitor the IEP to make sure the student is making progress.
- If the student is not making progress, they can think of alternative ways to help the student make progress.

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Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessionals help keep students with ASD focused on the classroom teacher and provide reinforcement when they are paying attention

Paraprofessionals can make sure the student:

- Is on task
- Has materials
- Has necessary supports

- ‣ Paraprofessionals are NOT responsible for developing curriculum content

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At My School

- What role do special educators play in helping students with ASD in the general education classroom?
- What information do special educators provide general educators about their students with ASD?
- When are special educators available to meet with general educators to brainstorm ideas?
- What role do paraprofessionals play in general education classrooms?
- What other supports are available to me?

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Resources

- Organization for Autism Research https://researchautism.org/
- National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorder https://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/evidence-based-practices

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- All video clips used in this presentation are from a DVD that was developed by the Organization for Autism Research (OAR) in collaboration with Fairfax County (Va.) Public Schools, with funding the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism, and OAR.

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