



Sensory Processing–Grounded Interventions Supplement Handouts

Sensory Strategies

Classroom/Environmental Strategies

1. Establish a predictable routine
2. Use 5-minute warnings for transitions to help children prepare
3. Use the same substitute whenever possible
4. Provide a quiet area in the classroom; put beanbag chairs, pillows, air-filled seat cushions, books, etc. in the area
5. Be alert to the number of visual and auditory distractions in your classroom
6. Use natural light when available and place lamps using soft glow or colored light bulbs.
7. Decrease classroom noise via carpeting or placing tennis balls on chair legs
8. Pay attention to your own voice volume and quality; use a lower, rhythmic voice cadence to calm students.
9. To gain attention in a quiet but very effective way, raise a fist with index finger extended and wait until all students have raised their hands in similar fashion; then begin lesson.
10. Alternate sedentary and movement activities; switch seats or areas within the classroom for different class activities.
11. Set up a “power station” or “sensory corner” for use throughout the day. Equip a corner of the room with heavy work activities such as hand weights, a jogging trampoline, a medicine ball, a clay station, vibrating toys, a poster illustrating exercises such as wall or floor push ups, sit ups, etc.
12. Have a basket of (quiet) fidget objects available for student use when needed – ask the students to set up the rules around how these objects may be used as well as the consequences when these rules are violated.
13. Use beanbag chairs in classrooms, allowing kids to use them during silent reading time or to lay over or under them during independent work tasks to get a change in position and the benefit of consistent pressure input.

'Settle-down' & 'Get Ready' Activities for

Individual Students:

1. Place chairs on desks at end of day or take down at beginning of day.
2. Erase or wash the chalkboard.
3. Wear weighted vests, belts or wrist weights.
4. Help rearrange desks in the classroom.
5. Fill crates (small ones that kids can carry) with books to take to other classrooms. Teachers could ask kids to move these crates back and forth as needed.
6. Help the gym teacher move mats, hang them up, etc.
7. Sharpen pencils with a manual sharpener.
8. Cut out items for display with oak tag.
9. Have student carry heavy notebooks to the office or from class to class.
10. Wear a weighted backpack when walking from class to class. Parents can put a notebook, book or books (depending on the size of the child) into their backpack each day for the ride or walk to school.
11. Carry books with both hands hugging the book to the chest.
12. Tie a Theraband around the front legs of a chair so that a child can push/pull against with their feet.
13. Put a foot block (such as a duct-taped phone book) under the child's seat.
14. Staple paper onto bulletin boards.
15. Play with medicine/weighted balls during gym.
16. Quiet squeeze toys or balls.
17. Squeeze/manipulate an artist's eraser.
18. Chair push-ups.
19. Push weighted carts (or a loaded Overhead Projector cart) or boxes across carpeted floor.
20. Stack chairs.
21. Have child pass out papers/objects to class members.

“Get Ready’ (Alerting) Activities for Classroom

1. Isometric exercise breaks – ask children to ‘freeze’ in ‘The Hulk’ positions; press hands together at chest level or above the head; flex biceps; stand on tiptoes.
2. Wall push-ups or the idea of "the room feels small this morning, can everyone help me push the walls out" for younger students.
3. Vary work/play positions – encourage a variety of positions standing at easel or board, lying on floor, standing at table, kneeling, etc.
4. Use an inflatable seat cushion to improve focusing for fidgety or lethargic students
5. Provide squeeze toys for student who need help focusing
6. Assign classroom jobs that involve movement
7. Provide regular times for movement activities, large motor play, recess
8. Play loud, fast music
9. Fast movement, calisthenics or Simon Says activity type activity can be especially helpful prior to sedentary activity
10. Do a power walk (walk vigorously, swinging arms and stomping feet)
11. Work in small groups with peers
12. Change routine of class activities
13. Have students work with unfamiliar peers
14. Add steps to tasks/activities
15. Stand up and work at the desk
16. Have students work in another part of the room
17. Do jumping jacks, jog in place, windmills, etc.
18. Use bright lights or flash lights
19. Work at chalkboard/dry erase boards rather than at desk
20. Switch classrooms with another teacher for short part of lesson
21. Use deeper voice projecting from the diaphragm
22. Play fast-paced, upbeat music
23. Play classroom game
24. Assign a student or small group to ‘teach’ or demonstrate the lesson
25. Move around the classroom while teaching
26. Use bright colors for lesson
27. Teach the lesson outside or in a lab classroom/library
28. Have students ‘show & tell’ their work
29. Deep breathing exercises
Toss a ‘nerf’ ball or balloon to various students while asking questions
30. Ask parents to send ‘heavy work’ foods for snack and lunch. Snacks that make the jaw muscles work (i.e. chewy, crunchy foods) can help students be calm and focus on their schoolwork. Foods such as carrot sticks, bagels, raisins, dried fruit, gummy bears, fruit roll ups, gum, beef jerky, pretzels, etc.

'Settle-down' Activities for Classroom:

1. Use dim lights and soft music (ie; classical music or Gregorian Chants or Earth Drums)
2. Plan an after lunch/recess activity that calms the whole class such as: have the class march around the room and pretend they are trees waving in the wind. As they march, the breeze slowly dies down and the trees stop waving
3. Have the class pretend they are balloons that are being blown up. Start on the floor, blow. Blow, blow until they are standing and fully blown up. Slowly let air out until they are lying on the floor
4. Stick with and/or get back to classroom routines ASAP
5. Play rhythmic music – ie: Earth Drums CD
6. Complete a few previously mastered problems
7. Turn off classroom lights
8. Repeat instructions using same words/sequence
9. Use a metronome in classroom; set slower pace for calming
10. Have a brief review session
11. Place 2-3 lamps around the classroom even with standard classroom lights
12. Have class repeat information in 'sing-song' fashion
13. Read a story out loud to the class
14. Watch an educational video/film
15. Count slowly, rhythmically using a deep voice until class calms
16. Use the same sound (ie: gavel tap, knock on desk/board) as signal for attention
17. Do slow stretches with arms, back and neck
18. Use the same substitute when possible
19. Allow certain children to work in a corner or self-contained space
20. Use 'office' folders or carrels
21. Have students take 10 deep breaths
22. Read outloud a short rhythmic poem or 'rap' song