



**Autism
Education
Trust**



**National
Autistic
Society**

Let's Learn About Autism

Lesson Plans

For 8-11-year-olds



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**Autistic
Young
Experts**

**Join us to share knowledge &
acceptance during
World Autism Acceptance Month 2025**

Session title:

Let's Learn About Autism

Session lengths:

35 minutes, 50 minutes or 1hr 30 minutes

Audience:

Primary (8-11)

Objectives

1. For pupils to have a starting knowledge of autism.
2. For pupils to understand that everyone is different and that different is good.
3. For pupils to understand how they can be a supportive friend/classmate.



Time	Introduction	Points to consider
Up to 5 minutes	<p>This presentation is an introduction to autism. Present the first three slides:</p> <p>Slide 1: We are all different Slide 2: People are different Slide 3: Brains are different</p>	<p>Very important: Read the 'Things to consider before you deliver Autism Acceptance resources' before you begin this presentation.</p>

Time	Introducing the concept of difference	Points to consider
5 minutes	<p>Slide 5: Play the video the first 1min31 seconds of 'Amazing things can happen': https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbwRrVw-CRo</p> <p>Talking prompts: People see the world in different ways. All brains work differently. Does anyone know what autism is?</p> <p>After a few responses, play the video until 2mins14. 2.14 – 2:45.</p> <p>Slide 6: Talking prompts: You can't see if someone is autistic. It is an invisible. Autism means that someone's brain works a little differently. Just like it says in the video, each autistic person is different. They have different strengths and different difficulties.</p> <p>Slide 7: Autism - the differences</p>	<p>Another question could be, does anyone know someone who is autistic?</p> <p>If you have a pupil in your class who is comfortable and who you have approached before the session, they can share their experiences.</p>



Time	Discussing difference	Points to consider
10 minutes	<p>Slide 8: Talking prompts: Talk about differences between yourself and other staff (or fictional characters... My friend X), focusing first on likes and dislikes. <i>e.g. I really enjoy Maths but Miss Smith doesn't. Miss Smith is really good at drawing. I find drawing hard. I really like listening to pop music. Mr Jones likes jazz music.</i></p> <p>Slide 9: Start to move towards differences in sensory needs, communication and social interaction.</p> <p><i>e.g. Mrs Brown loves the smell of lunch. The smell of lunch makes me feel funny. Mrs Brown likes to have really colourful display boards. Really colourful display boards make my eyes hurt. Mrs Brown loves to wear woolly jumpers. I find woolly jumpers so itchy. They hurt my skin. Mrs Brown loves to chat on the bus. I can't chat on the bus. It is already too noisy.</i></p> <p>If you have time and it feels appropriate, ask the children to talk in pairs or groups about what they like or how they feel.</p> <p>You could use the examples above. Or you could use colours, animals, sports, lessons or weather.</p> <p>Ask a few to share back their answers and see how they were different to their partner or group members.</p> <p>Talking prompts: Lots of you had different answers there. You all like and dislike different things. We think difference is good. It wouldn't be fun if we were all the same!</p>	



Time	Discussing difference	Points to consider
Up to 15 minutes	<p>We are now going to think about our differences a bit more.</p> <p>We are going to write or draw about our feelings and our skills.</p> <p>Talking prompts: <i>What makes you happy? What do you do when you're happy?</i> Once you have had a few responses, ask them each to draw their answer in the box on the worksheet. Again, emphasise that everyone's answer can or will be different.</p> <p>You have around 5 minutes per question and for the pupils to write or draw their responses.</p> <p><i>What makes you sad? What do you do when you're sad? What is the thing you are best at?</i></p> <p>Once they have written or drawn their answers for the three prompt questions, finish up the activity by reiterating the importance and value of difference.</p> <p>Talking prompts: We need different skills. We need different strengths. That's what helps teams work.</p> <p>TOTAL TIME: 35 MINUTES</p>	<p>The worksheet has examples for the pupils to use. Where possible, encourage them to think of their own.</p> <p>Children can write or draw. Please emphasise that whatever they draw would express their views and so they don't need to worry about being 'good' at drawing.</p>



Time	Introduction	Points to consider
Up to 5 minutes	<p>Slide 11: To take the lesson further, or for a second lesson, turn to thinking about how being different at school can be diff cult.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We know that difference is great, but sometimes it can be hard when you think differently. • It can make you worried about making friends. • It can be hard if you don't like the same things as other people. • It can make you feel like no-one wants to play with you. <p>Slide 12: Amazing things can happen: 3:23 onwards talks about how people can support autistic friends.</p>	



Time	Introduction	Points to consider
Up to 10 minutes	<p>Slide 12: Ask the children: How can we be better classmates?</p> <p>Talking prompts: How can we support each other? How can we support our autistic classmates? How can we celebrate the fact that everyone has different likes and dislikes?</p> <p>If you have an autistic person who has said they're happy to be involved, you can ask them to talk about the way they see the world. You can ask them to share how they would like to be supported by their friends.</p> <p>Once you have had a few responses, ask them each to write or draw their answer in the box on the worksheet. Again, emphasise that everyone's answer can or will be different.</p> <p>Display idea: Use the young people's worksheets and create a display about valuing difference and being supportive.</p> <p>TOTAL TIME: 50 MINUTES</p>	<p>If this activity is being done straight after the activity on differences, the pupils will understand how the worksheet works. If there is a gap between lessons, remind them that they can draw or write in the worksheet.</p>



Time	Introduction	Points to consider
Up to 40 minutes	<p>Slide 13-16: The Autistic Young Expert's panel have come up with the following four learning scenarios based on their experiences at school. These scenarios should be used to promote discussion, and support pupils in working out how to be inclusive. The suggested answers are not exhaustive but are the start of a conversation. No pupil should be made to feel that they are giving the wrong answer but should be supported to explore their ideas.</p> <p>These scenarios could be used as part of a follow-up discussion to the first two activities. They could also be returned to whenever there is a situation in which classmates aren't being supportive of one another as a reminder.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You could split the class into smaller groups and give them each a scenario to work through • You could tackle one scenario at a time as a whole class and ask for pupils to answer the questions individually • You could use the scenarios as role-plays and ask pupils to act out how they would respond or react <p>TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES</p>	<p>Refer to the Learning Scenarios on the Idea Pad worksheet.</p>





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Join the National Autistic Society for a month of awareness-raising and fundraising.

World Autism Acceptance Month is the whole of April 2025

There are lots of different and creative ways to get involved including doing a 5km fundraising walk for the National Autistic Society, or simply fundraising in your own way.

Find out more and get more resources to help you at www.autism.org.uk

For more information on autism and education, visit: www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk

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