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National
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Society

Let's Learn About Autism

Lesson Plans

For 4-7-year-olds



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Autistic
Young
Experts

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

Lesson plans: Let's Learn About Autism

Session title:	Let's Learn About Autism
Session lengths:	35 minutes, 50 minutes or 1hr 30 minutes
Audience:	Primary (4-7)
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none">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. We are learning about autism as it is World Autism Acceptance Week.</p> <p>Slide 1: We are all different Slide 2: People are different Slide 3: Brains are different</p>	<p>Read the 'Things to consider before you deliver Autism Acceptance resources' before you begin this presentation.</p>

Time	Introducing Pablo	Points to consider
5 minutes	<p>Slide 5: Play the video of Pablo and his friends talking about how they see the world in different ways: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OuWhloifLsc (1:12)</p> <p>Talking prompts: Pablo is autistic. He sees the world in a different way. Does anyone know what autism is?</p> <p>Slides 6-9: You can't see if someone is autistic. Autism means that someone's brain works a little differently.</p> <p>Just like the characters in Pablo, each autistic person is different. They have different strengths and need help with different things.</p> <p>Slide 10: Autism, the differences</p>	<p>You may wish to play the video more than once. It is a sing-a-long version and so you can encourage pupils to read along with the song, if this works with the group dynamic. If you have an autistic pupil or a pupil who struggles with noise, play the video without singing-along.</p>



Time	Discussing difference	Points to consider
10 minutes	<p>Slides 11-13: Talking prompts: Talk about the 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>Slides 14-17: Start to move towards differences in sensory needs, communication and social interaction. <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>Slides 14-17: 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. 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	Worksheet	Points to consider
Up to 15 minutes	<p>Slides 17-19: We are now going to think about our differences a bit more. We are going to draw or write about our feelings and our skills.</p> <p>Talking prompts: <i>What makes you happy? What do you do when you're happy?</i></p> <p>Once you have had a few responses, ask them each to draw or write 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 draw or write their responses.</p> <p><i>What makes you sad or worried? What do you do when you're sad or worried ?</i></p> <p>What is the thing you are best at?</p> <p>Once they have drawn or written their answers for the 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>Emphasise that whatever they draw or write would express their views and so they don't need to worry about being 'good' at drawing or writing.</p>



Time	Further activity option: Making friends at school	Points to consider
Up to 5 minutes	<p>Slides 20-23: To take the lesson further, or for a second lesson, turn to thinking about how being different at school can be difficult</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 24: Watch the Pablo video about making friends at school https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJYs0e1k-Q4 (3:16)</p> <p>How can we support someone like Pablo?</p> <p>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.</p> <p>You can ask them to share how they would like to be supported by their friends.</p>	



Time	What makes a good friend?	Points to consider
Up to 10 minutes	<p>Slides 25-27: Ask the children: <i>How can we be better classmates?</i></p> <p>Talking prompts: How can we be better classmates? How can we be kind to our autistic classmates?</p> <p>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>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	Learning scenarios	Points to consider
Up to 40 minutes	<p>Slide 28-31: 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>Refer to the Learning Scenarios worksheet.</p>



Time	Learning scenarios continued...	Points to consider
Up to 40 minutes	<p>Follow up questions:</p> <p>Scenario 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How could you help someone join in without talking? • What games can you play that don't need verbal communication? • Why do you think he doesn't like to make eye contact? <p>Scenario 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you know what a sensory sensitivity is? • Why do you think the girl is upset? <p>Scenario 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you know what stimming is? • Do you know why some people can focus longer than others? • Do you find it hard to sit still? <p>Scenario 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you know what a special interest is? • How many ways of communicating can you think of? <p>TOTAL TIME: 1h 30 MINUTES</p>	<p>Refer to the Learning Scenarios worksheet.</p>





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

World Autism Awareness Month is for 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 by simply fundraising in your own way.

Find out more at: www.autism.org.uk

For more information on autism and education, visit:

www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk

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