

Peer information activity book: autism



All students

All students are unique.

All students have **strengths**.

All students have **things they are still learning**.

All students have **something in common** – a shared interest, hobby, or activity they enjoy.

Word Search:

Find the interests/hobbies



A	P	A	P	E	R	P	L	A	N	E	S	P	O
N	R	T	S	P	U	Z	Z	R	L	D	A	N	X
I	M	I	N	A	O	G	E	T	L	Z	X	Z	N
M	M	U	S	P	O	D	A	N	F	O	O	T	Y
A	C	I	N	G	I	N	A	Y	T	O	B	O	F
L	M	A	L	S	A	S	N	I	M	Z	X	Z	G
S	E	L	Z	Z	U	P	X	I	C	C	L	S	N
F	X	A	G	O	X	O	G	E	L	I	O	E	I
O	T	L	M	S	B	R	N	W	N	S	I	Z	C
O	H	B	G	C	T	T	E	A	P	U	S	M	N
S	L	Y	M	E	G	S	H	T	A	M	I	M	A
I	T	S	A	O	T	X	R	D	W	N	C	Z	D
G	N	I	M	M	I	W	S	R	Z	G	A	S	W
S	Z	Z	U	U	S	P	N	I	M	I	M	L	A

Puzzles

Sports

Xbox

Dancing

Maths

Footy

Music

Lego

Swimming

Art

Animals

Paperplanes



Unique

We all are born with different hair, eyes and our own unique fingerprints. Some students are born on the autism spectrum. Just like hair, eyes or fingerprints, this is a part of them, but not who they are. Take the time to get to know them, and you'll find there are lots of things you have in common.

Stamp your fingerprints into this box. Compare your fingerprints with others in your class. No one's fingerprints are the same.

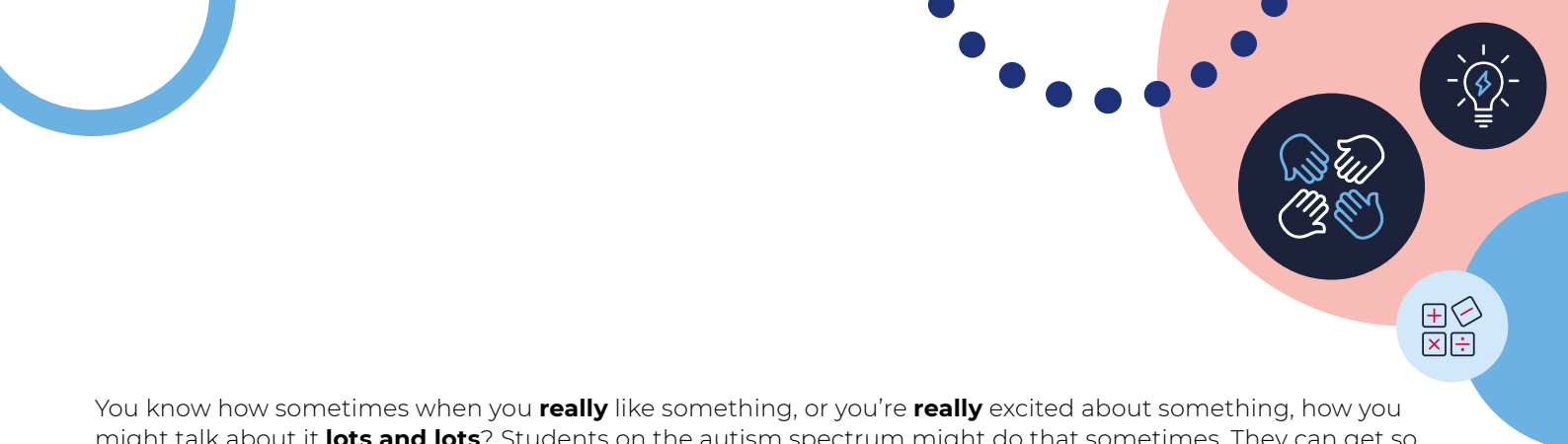
What is autism?

Students on the autism spectrum may have unique or creative ideas, or know lots about a specific interest. They might find making friends, joining in, talking to others or changing plans hard. They might understand, hear and feel things a little differently to others, and have different or really intense interests and hobbies.

Interests

Some students on the autism spectrum have a really strong interest. They might know **lots** about their interest. Some students know **even more than most adults** about their interest.

Draw something that you are interested in, or that you get really excited about.



You know how sometimes when you **really** like something, or you're **really** excited about something, how you might talk about it **lots and lots**? Students on the autism spectrum might do that sometimes. They can get so excited about their interest that they might not realise you're not as interested in it as them.

If they talk for a long time about their interest, you can change the topic. You can say things like "That's pretty cool, but let's talk about something else now", and you can suggest a new topic or something else you can do together.

Write down some topics or activities you could talk about:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Talking and joining in

Some students on the autism spectrum might use lots of words. Some students might use only a few or no words. Others might copy what you say. This is how some students on the autism spectrum learn, or it might be their way of agreeing with what is said.

Students on the autism spectrum might not look you in the eyes, and they might not be sure how to join in with you or your friends. It doesn't mean they don't want friends or they don't want to join in.

Your teacher can tell you how to talk with a student on the autism spectrum in your class, and how to ask them to join in. Sometimes they might not answer you. They aren't ignoring you on purpose. You can try getting their attention again if that happens.

Ideas for talking and playing with a student on the autism spectrum:

- Saying their name and getting them to look and listen
- Sharing things or taking turns playing
- Talking about what you're doing



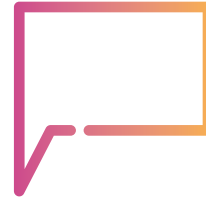
STAY

- Stay with your buddy
- Take turns if you want to play different things



PLAY

- Share with your buddy



TALK

- Talk about what you're doing
- Keep talking if they don't answer

Feelings

Some students on the autism spectrum might get really upset by things which might not bother other people. This might be loud noises or particular smells. They might be upset when there are unexpected changes.

You can help by being considerate of what upsets them. When they're worried or upset, they might cover their ears or face or eyes, cry or yell, they might flap their hands around, or they may spin or jump. This is their way of coping when they are feeling a bit overwhelmed. Sometimes when they're really happy or excited they might flap their hands or spin or jump too.

Just like you!

Students on the autism spectrum have lots of ways in which they're just like you. They can feel happy, sad, excited, or worried – just like you. They are learning, growing and exploring – just like you. And they like having friends, going to parties, and being included – just like you.

