

Case study 9 (Autism spectrum disorder)

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by the difficulties in social communication, including verbal and nonverbal communication; deficits in social interactions; and restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests or activities and sensory problems. Many of those with ASD can have delayed or absence of language development, intellectual disabilities, poor motor coordination and attention weaknesses.

- **Description:** Emily is a 10-year-old girl diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and has learning difficulties. She is in the 4th grade and attends a mainstream classroom with a personal support teacher.

Social and emotional difficulties: Emily has trouble with social interaction and communication. She struggles with understanding nonverbal cues, such as facial expressions and body language, and often engages in repetitive behaviors. She also experiences anxiety in social situations and has trouble making friends.

Cognitive difficulties: Emily has difficulty with executive functioning skills and has trouble with organization, planning, and prioritizing. She also has difficulties with memory retention and recall.

Learning difficulties: Emily has a specific learning disability in mathematics and struggles with basic concepts such as addition, subtraction, and multiplication. She also has difficulties with reading and writing, and requires accommodations such as extra time on tests and the use of assistive technology.

Behavioral difficulties: Emily has a tendency to engage in repetitive behaviors and can become easily frustrated, leading to outbursts of anger. She also has trouble regulating her emotions and can become overwhelmed, leading to meltdowns.

- **Key words:** autism spectrum disorder (ASD), support teacher, repetitive behaviors, anxiety

All of these games can help with different aspects or challenges that some children with Autism Spectrum Disorder may have.

Tool 1:

1. **Title:** Let's Pretend
2. **Using this tool you can detect** social interaction **problems**
3. **Instructions / Methodology / Recommendations how to use the tool:** The teacher encourages children to participate in pretend play activities, such as playing house or doctor. Children with autism spectrum disorder may struggle with social interaction and may not engage in pretend play or may struggle to take on roles in the pretend play. Pretend play is a critical part of children's

development. When a child pretends to be a chef stirring soup or an astronaut going to the moon, he's building many different skills, including:

- Language skills
 - Social and emotional skills
 - Problem-solving and thinking skills
4. **Interpretation of the results:** If the child consistently does not engage in pretend play or struggles to take on roles, it may indicate a problem with social interaction.
 5. **Key words:** Let's Pretend, social interaction, pretend play, roles
 6. **Links for more information:**
<https://www.dovepress.com/prediction-of-playfulness-by-pretend-play-severity-of-autism-behaviors-peer-reviewed-fulltext-article-NDT>

Tool 2:

1. **Title:** What's Missing?
2. **Using this tool you can detect** sensory processing **problems**
3. **Instructions / Methodology / Recommendations how to use the tool:**
What's Missing? is designed to promote observation, visual and auditory skills including the development of descriptive language. The teacher provides a set of objects or pictures, and then removes one or more items while the child is not looking. The child is then asked to identify which item is missing. Children with autism spectrum disorder may have difficulty processing sensory information and may struggle to identify what is missing.
4. **Interpretation of the results:** If the child consistently struggles to identify what is missing, it may indicate a problem with sensory processing.
5. **Key words:** What's Missing?, sensory processing, identification
6. **Links for more information:**
<https://www.eslkidsgames.com/2017/06/esl-game-whats-missing.html>

Tool 3:

1. **Title:** Name That Emotion
2. **Using this tool you can detect** social communication **problems**
3. **Instructions / Methodology / Recommendations how to use the tool:** The teacher provides pictures of people with different facial expressions, and asks the child to identify the emotion being displayed. Children with autism spectrum disorder may have difficulty with social communication and may struggle to identify emotions in others.
4. **Interpretation of the results:** If the child consistently struggles to identify emotions, it may indicate a problem with social communication.
5. **Key words:** Name That Emotion, social communication, emotion recognition
6. **Links for more information:**
https://www.elsanetwork.org/free_resource/name-the-emotion-game/

Tool 4:

1. **Title:** Sensory Walk
2. **Using this tool you can detect** sensory processing **problems**
3. **Instructions / Methodology / Recommendations how to use the tool:** A sensory walk is typically a fun or colourful pathway that is used for children to explore new or different sensory experiences. Sensory paths can be used to support children with sensory processing issues or to help children to develop motor skills, balance, hand-eye coordination and spatial awareness. The teacher creates a sensory walk using various textures and objects, such as foam mats, bean bags, and textured mats. The child is asked to walk or step on each item in the sensory walk. Children with autism spectrum disorder may have difficulty processing sensory information and may struggle to walk or step on certain textures.
4. **Interpretation of the results:** If the child consistently avoids or struggles with certain textures, it may indicate a problem with sensory processing.
5. **Key words:** Sensory Walk, sensory processing, textures
6. **Links for more information:** <https://www.twinkl.it/teaching-wiki/sensory-walk>