

## **Five Effective Instructional Strategies: Students with ASD in the Classroom**

### **What are instructional strategies?**

Instructional strategies refer to the learning techniques a teacher uses to help students learn or gain a better understanding of the course material (Persaud, 2020).

#### **1. Avoid Abstractions:**

When working with students with ASD, it is important to remember that they usually have difficulty understanding abstract ideas and concepts. In order to help them understand the material in a concrete manner, teachers can use visual aids or cues. Instructors should also ask directive rather than open-ended questions.

#### **2. Be Verbally Clear:**

People on the autism spectrum can have difficulty picking out the main points in a lecture or in writing due to processing speed issues or organizational deficits. It is important that instructions and lectures should be clear, to the point, and not overly verbose. Teachers should break assignments and instructions down into small, manageable increments. By explaining instructions and concepts clearly, and breaking them down, teachers will avoid confusing their students.

#### **3. Use Literal Speech:**

It is important to remember that most people with ASD have difficulty understanding idioms, irony, double-meanings, and sarcasm. Using literal speech whenever possible will avoid confusion in you students with autism. If teachers need to illustrate idioms, irony, or sarcasm as part of their lesson, it will be important to offer concrete explanations and examples to illustrate the literal meaning of the terms.

#### **4. Prepare for Transitions:**

People with ASD can become anxious and upset at transition times because they require predictability and structure. Teachers should remind students verbally and visually of upcoming transition times such as class ending, when to turn in homework, different components of the class, test days, and assemblies. Frequent, consistent reminders will help lower the anxiety of students with ASD.

#### **5. Mitigate Sensory Overload:**

Many students with ASD have difficulty with sensory overload; if a classroom is noisy, bright or visually chaotic, it can trigger anxiety and distraction. Classroom s should have sensory break areas, or teachers should have strategies in place to help students on the spectrum. By keeping their classroom uncluttered, and allow for seating arrangements that avoid distraction, a teacher can help student with ASD stay focused and calm.

## References

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- Moreno, S., & O'Neal, C. (2020). Tips for teaching high-functioning people with autism. Indiana Resource Center for Autism. <https://www.iidc.indiana.edu/irca/articles/tips-for-teaching-high-functioning-people-with-autism>.