



The Owl Centre

Attention Autism - Activity Ideas

Attention Autism aims to: encourage children to WANT to communicate
 encourage a child increase their focus and ability to engage

LEVEL 1 – Attention getter: to focus a child’s attention using a bucket or a box

Start with a song or a rhyme to capture attention; “knock knock knock, what’s in the box? Open please”

Take one item out, have a few gos with it, then say ‘finished’, and return it to the bucket / box.

Ideas for box:

Moving, noisy toys (good one to start with)

Bubbles (children still need to sit!)

Balloon - blow up and let go

Wind-up toys

Flashy toys

Musical instruments

Whoopee cushion

Balls

Party blowers

LEVEL 2 – Attention Builder: to attend from the start to the finish of an activity

Equipment needed - mat (it can get messy!), cement trays

Children watch the adult carry out a sensory activity

Sensory activities for Level 2 and 3:

Cornflour and water (can also add food colouring) - turn over onto tray.

Flour through a sieve- can then draw on the flour

Link to *‘Building attention in children with Autism’*

Salt pouring/using to draw (need salt pourer with single, small hole)

Squeezing paint/ food colouring from a height - turn over to make a butterfly.

Bottle of lemonade- add food colouring and salt (makes volcano!)

Making sand/flour castles and 'splatting' them down.

Anything involving pouring water from a height- dropping stones in.

Pouring lentils/rice onto metal tray/down corrugated cardboard.

Rolling balls through paint and along paper.

Pouring water onto any item related to the classes' theme.

LEVEL 3 – Attention Shifting: to shift their attention from audience to active participant and to take a turn.

At this stage, the activity becomes an interactive game:

- 1. The adult has a turn to demonstrate the task**
- 2. Then each child takes a turn at carrying out the activity**

LEVEL 4 – Attention Builder: to focus their attention on their own activity.

- 1. The adult has small packs of identical activities. These packs will encourage the children to focus their attention in a group**
- 2. The adult demonstrates the task and packs it away.**
- 3. The child is given their own identical task and has to complete it in exactly the same way they saw the adult demonstrate it.**

Ideas to try:

Cutting a roll of playdough into interesting pieces

Pouring lentils with a small bottles

Putting treasure into oats

Spaghetti monsters

Paper aeroplane

Building a sandcastle