



# Sensory Development - 2019/20 Summer 2

These materials are designed to be flexible. When using them you can choose to run through the entire session in one sitting, moving through each of the senses in turn. Alternatively, you can focus on just one sense, either in individual blocks throughout the day or focusing on just one sense each day. Sessions are similar in format and utilise similar activities (with different stimuli) as previous terms with slight alterations in order to build on learning.

## Session Aims

### Generic

To extend student's tolerance of sensory\* experience  
To increase the scope of the student's sensory\* experiences

*\*insert relevant sense*

### Sense Specific

To increase visual attention by 'x' seconds | Extend visual range by 'x'cms  
To Increase auditory attention by 'x' seconds  
To accept shared exploration/explore textures for 'x' seconds  
To move lips / tongue in response to a taste  
To locate/track a smell which is moving toward self  
To accept / attend to / anticipate vestibular movement for up to 'x' minutes  
To accept / tolerate / anticipate proprioceptive activities for up to 'x' minutes

## Resources Needed

**Music** - Choose an unfamiliar piece of music to be used to cue the student into the session – the music choice should be the same each time the session is run

**Sensory Stimuli** – A table containing examples for each sense, linked to the season (Summer 2), can be found at the end of this document.

## Session Activities

### Overview

- Play cue song
- Introduce the sense you will be exploring
- Aid exploration (see notes below)
- Explain you have finished exploring that sense
- Play cue song
- End session or move onto the next 'sense'

### Notes on 'exploration'

Be conscious of your environment, it should be free from distractions, this includes ambient noises and visual clutter.

Students may have different sensory ranges for different stimuli, so a torch may result in a visual range increase of 40-45cms over a short period of time, whereas a mirror may result in an increase of 15-17cms over the same period of time. This is important to remember if you decide to change the resources used on a daily or weekly basis as sensory range may appear to reduce. The important thing is to note (and celebrate) progress in range for each stimuli rather than compare the ranges of different stimuli (although this can help build a good picture of students tolerance for differing stimuli).

The chart below highlights how to aid 'exploration' for each sense. For some senses there is more than one way of developing the sense. You should only work on one at a time. You can alternate on a daily or weekly basis.



**Visual** - Introduce by touching the side of the student's eye and tell them you will be looking for the stimulus (use stimuli name e.g. torchlight)

***Increasing Visual Attention***

- Find a point in front of them where they are able to see and focus on the stimulus easily
- Determine, how long they will look at the stimuli. Repeat but this time as they are about to lose interest move the stimuli slightly / turn off then on to see if it increases the attention span
- Repeat the above step to their left and right, pausing between each

***Extending Visual Range***

- Find a point in front of them where they are able to see and focus on the stimulus easily
- Move the stimulus slowly away from the established point until interest is lost, taking note of the approximate distance from their eyes
- Repeat the above step for each of the following; moving the stimulus upward, downward, to the left and to the right, pausing between each.
- Over time the aim is to increase the distance at which your student loses interest



**Auditory** - Introduce by touching the student's ears and tell them they are about to hear a stimulus (use stimuli name e.g. windchimes)

***Increasing Auditory Attention***

- Find a point in front of them where they are able to hear and focus on the stimulus easily
- Determine, how long they will listen to the stimuli. Repeat but this time as they are about to lose interest increase the sound / stop then start again to see if it increases the attention span
- Repeat the above step to their left and right, pausing between each

***Extending Auditory Range***

- Create a sustained (5-10seconds) sound using the stimulus directly in front of them establishing a point where the sound is obviously heard
- Pause then repeat the sustained playing, moving the stimuli gradually away from them until interest is lost, taking note of the approximate distance from them, this can be done either by continually playing until interest is lost or by playing sustained sound, briefly pausing, moving the sound 10cms (smaller increments if they have severe hearing difficulties, larger increments if they have no hearing impairments) and playing, continuing until the student does not respond.
- Pause then repeat the above step behind them, then to their left side, and finally their right side, pausing between each (ensure this pause is longer than those used during the activity)



**Tactile** – Introduce, touching the student’s hands and tell them they are going to be touching and feeling a stimulus (use stimuli name e.g. a brush)

- Place stimuli into a position where you can support them to touch the stimuli or they are able to independently explore. See how long they will tolerate touching/exploring the object, then remove. They may lose interest or have a distinct reaction, either becoming engrossed in the item or violently withdrawing their hands (tactile defensiveness).
- Repeat the above step encouraging the students to explore for 1-2s longer (where tactile defensiveness evident)
- Repeat with 2 or 3 distinctly different tactile resources.



**Gustation** - Introduce by touching the side of the student’s mouth and explain they will be tasting certain stimuli (use stimuli name e.g.honey)

- Place stimuli on lip of tongue or lower lip and note reaction
- Cleanse pallet with some water
- Repeat with another stimuli



**Olfactory** - Introduce by touching the student’s nose and tell them you will smelling the stimulus (use stimuli name e.g. Rosemary)

- Bring the stimulus in from a distance and note when they display a reaction
- Pause and reintroduce the stimulus closer than the established point then move side to side encouraging student to follow the stimuli, as you rotate gradually move the stimuli further away noting when student loses interest
- Repeat with additional stimuli



**Movement (Balance)**- Introduce by firmly tapping the student’s chair/stander/walking frame eye and tell them you will be exploring movement through stimuli (use stimuli name e.g. turning)

- Gently move the student in that manner e.g. moving or supporting student to move themselves in a circular pattern or twisting from side to side, note student response
  - Repeat
- NB: tolerance of movement to built up over several days not during one session – take your lead from



**Movement (Pressure)** - Introduce by touching the student’s shoulders and explain you will be exploring stimuli (use stimuli name e.g. hand massage)

- Clearly explain to the student what you are going to do before doing so
- Complete movement or activity in no more than 5 seconds noting their response, if student seems quite tolerant then repeat for up to 3 minutes or when they start to resist, if they are quite defensive then repeat for only 5 seconds. It is important to note that when completing an activity, you may find students are more tolerant on one side than the other. For example they may allow a hand massage to their right hand for 3 minutes but pull away their left after 30 seconds.

# Sensory Stimuli



SIGHT <i>Visual stimuli</i>	HEARING <i>Auditory stimuli</i>	TOUCH <i>Tactile stimuli</i>	TASTE <i>Gustation stimuli</i>	SMELL <i>Olfactory stimuli</i>	VESTIBULAR <i>Movement (Balance) Stimuli</i>	PROPRIOCEPTION <i>Movement (Pressure) Stimuli</i>
<p><u>Lights</u> Candles Lanterns Fairy Lights</p> <p><u>Reflective surfaces</u> Back of a spoon</p> <p><u>Colours</u> High contrast items Monochrome items Neon items</p> <p><i>NB: Never shine lights into students eyes</i></p>	<p><u>Music</u> Instruments Noise Makers Pot and pan drums Windchimes</p> <p><u>Sound effects*</u> Dog bark Water flow Owl Call Clink of glasses</p> <p><i>*sound effect libraries <a href="http://bbcfx.acropolis.org.uk/">http://bbcfx.acropolis.org.uk/</a>  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/audiolibrary/soundeffects?nv=1">https://www.youtube.com/audiolibrary/soundeffects?nv=1</a></i></p>	<p><u>Textured</u> Brushes Bubble wrap Sandpaper Cotton wool Tree Bark Chiffon scarves</p> <p><u>'Fluid' textures</u> Sand Water Shaving Foam</p> <p><u>Shape</u> Different balls Sponges</p>	<p><u>Sour</u> Grapefruit Vinegar</p> <p><u>Sweet</u> Apple juice Ice Cream</p> <p><u>Bitter</u> Ginger Dandelion</p> <p><u>Salty</u> Eggs</p> <p><u>Umami (savoury)</u> Tomato Cheese</p> <p><i>NB: Always check a learners allergies before offering tastes</i></p>	<p><u>Natural</u> Cut grass Peaches</p> <p><u>Manmade</u> Shampoo Suntan lotion BBQ</p> <p><i>NB: Avoid 'squirting' or 'spraying' directly at students. It may be best to make up simple 'smelling bottles' (spray/decant item onto cotton wool and place inside a squeezezy bottle)</i></p>	<p>Rocking motions Bouncing motions Turning motions Swinging motions Jumping motions Rolling motions Spinning motions</p>	<p><u>Pressure</u> Pushing &amp; Pulling Gentle stretches Massage Squeezes</p> <p><u>Movement (awareness of body)</u> Waving arms / flapping arms Patting knees Nodding head</p> <p><u>Sensation</u> Brushing (across skin) Using a paper fan to create breeze against skin</p>