



# IMPROVING FOCUS & BEHAVIOR IN THE CLASSROOM

## MODULE 12

# Sensory Observations in the Classroom

Here are some quick tips for observing sensory students in the classroom and what to look for. These could likely be the underlying issue for the student and should be ruled out by an Occupational Therapist / other professionals.

1

### Student is:

- Laying head down on the desk or arm during writing tasks
- Tilting head to one side during reading and/or writing tasks
- Turning paper significantly to the side during writing tasks

### May be a sign of:

- Overall Low Tone / Endurance
- Visual / Ocular Motor Challenge
- Visual Spatial Challenge
- Retained Primitive Reflexes

2

### Student is:

- Becoming upset and / or refuses to complete a writing task that requires copying from the board.

### May be a sign of:

- Visual / Ocular Motor Challenge
- Handwriting Challenge
- Visual Spatial Challenge

3

### **Student is:**

- Often seeming to be lost during class instructions and does not seem to know what to do after instructions are given.

### **May be a sign of:**

- Auditory Processing Challenge
- Executive Functioning Challenge

4

### **Student is:**

Frequently chewing on:

- shirt / clothing items
- writing utensil
- paper
- other non-edibles

### **May be a sign of:**

- Oral Motor Challenge
- Sensory Seeking
- Attention Challenge
- Retained Primitive Reflexes

5

### **Student is:**

- Not using their non-dominant hand to stabilize paper or other objects during fine motor tasks, and/or switches hands during writing tasks.

### **May be a sign of:**

- Bilateral Integration Challenge
- Strength / Endurance Challenge

6

## Student is:

## May be a sign of:

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Frequently:

- bumping into others or furniture
  - seeming clumsy
  - falling out of chair
- Proprioception / Body Awareness Challenge
  - Visual Spatial Challenge
  - Retained Primitive Reflexes

7

## Student is:

## May be a sign of:

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- Seeming unable to remain seated and focused for more than a couple of minutes at a time, even during preferred activities.
- Sensory Seeking or Craving
  - Vestibular Challenge
  - Attention Challenge
  - Possible Visual / Ocular Motor Challenge

*This is NOT the same student who gets bored during non-preferred activities.*