

Learn how you can modify educational activities for children with Down syndrome with this article.

You'll find activities you can use with your students, helpful tips for your classroom and go over the value of inclusion.

Modifying Classroom Activities

One of the best ways you can help support students with Down syndrome is by adjusting standard classroom activities to make them more inclusive. Focusing on an inclusive classroom offers students with Down syndrome benefits that include higher independence, improved academic understanding and boosts in communication.

Modifying educational activities can seem daunting at first, but there are a few tips that can make this process easier. Because many students with Down syndrome learn visually, you can consider including more visual information in your instruction. Offering easy-to-follow directions broken down into steps can also help.

When adapting activities for students with Down syndrome, you should also be mindful of giving them enough time to complete their work. Keep in mind that large group activities can prove more challenging for these students. Focusing on hands-on tasks is another good idea. Finally, try to minimize the distractions these students have to contend with while they work on their activities.

You can find out more about Down syndrome itself with this lesson on the cause, progression and treatment of this syndrome. Understanding this information can help you better provide the educational support your students need while working on activities in these subjects:

◆ Language Arts

Rainbow Writing

This hands-on activity helps students practice creating shapes or letters.

Supplies:

- A tray with rainbow colored tape covering the inside
- Salt

What to Do:

Place some salt in the tray and instruct students to use their fingers to create different shapes or letters. You can adapt this activity by drawing the shape or letter you'd like them to practice on your whiteboard.

Play-Doh Impressions

Students can use this activity to practice manipulating tools and creating shapes!

Supplies:

- Play-Doh
- Pencils

Directions

Begin by handing out Play-Doh and pencils. Instruct students to draw lines or other shapes you're working on. Visually demonstrate what you would like your students to focus on.

◆ **Science**

Floating Raisins

This activity helps students learn about buoyancy.

You'll Need:

- Raisins cut in half
- Cups
- Club soda (make sure it's not flat)

What to Do:

Have students pour club soda into their glass and then put in their half of a raisin. You can adapt this activity by having students work on it one step at a time. Then allow them to watch the raisin as it rises and falls thanks to the bubbles sticking to it!

Paper Towel Seeds

Use this activity to help demonstrate how plants grow to your students.

Get These Supplies:

- Seeds
- Paper towels
- Plastic bags
- Stapler
- Water

Instructions:

Have students fold their paper towels and put them in the bags. Your students will then need to staple a row of staples across the middle of the bag. You might want to help with this part. Assist students with pouring about $\frac{1}{2}$ c of water into the bag before they add their seeds. Finally, have your students close their bags and tape them to a window. After a few days, they should be able to see the seeds germinate! Make sure to take this activity step by step to help all your students understand what they're doing!

◆ **Math**

Number Memory

This activity is an easy way to help students work on their number sense and memory.

You'll Need:

- Flashcards
- Stickers

What to Do:

Set up your flashcards by writing numerals on half of them, and placing stickers equal to the numerals on the other half. Adapt this activity by keeping the

numbers small and not using an overwhelming number of cards. Place all the cards face down and have students try to match the numerals to the right amount of stickers. You can also model this activity for your students and repeat it several times so students can catch on to what they're expected to do in this activity.

Picture the Number

Students can use this activity to get used to numbers.

Supplies:

- Papers with the outlines of large numbers printed on them
- Leaves
- Crayons or markers

Directions:

Hand out papers and leaves. Instruct your students to cover the leaves with the paper and rub their crayons or markers over them to color in the numbers. Use modeling to show students what they need to do. This activity can help get students familiar with different numbers in a fun way.