

# Barriers to learning for Autistic people in classroom settings

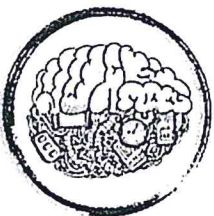
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## I hear:

the sound of my pencil scratching on paper,  
people moving,  
people writing,  
people breathing,  
people opening pencil cases,  
people chewing,  
clocks ticking  
noises from outside the classroom,  
noises from the classroom next door,  
students talking,  
teachers talking,  
teachers talking lots of words all at once,  
fans spinning, heaters blowing,  
other people laughing- sometimes at me,  
and I can't selectively filter what I hear to hone in on what you think I should be attending to

## I feel:

my clothes,  
my shoes,  
the rough desk,  
the hard chair,  
the contrast of textures on my desk- book,  
papers, pens, pencils,  
small variations in temperature,  
bumps of other students on my body as we move around  
my hungry tummy and full bladder  
and I can't simply ignore things that I feel that bother me



## I see:

posters,  
art work,  
things on desks and shelves,  
people moving around,  
flickering of fluorescent lighting,  
contrast between light and shadow,  
what is happening through windows and open doors,  
and I find it very difficult to concentrate on just one thing when all these other things are present

## I smell:

cleaning products,  
other peoples food,  
other peoples perfume,  
other peoples deodorant,  
other peoples hair products,  
other peoples make up,  
markers, glue, paint, paper, pencil shavings  
and these things can make me feel physically ill

## You expect me to:

sit still, be quiet, stay "on task", concentrate, be polite, speak when spoken to, make eye contact, not stim, only eat drink and use the bathroom when you say I can, be engaged all day with minimal breaks, use socially appropriate words and gestures, get the answers right, laugh at jokes, not cry or look upset, fit in, figure out what you expect of me when you don't explain it in a way I understand, play the way the other kids play, look normal, be neat and I am already overwhelmed trying to process what I hear, see, smell and feel