



Cap sur l'école inclusive
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Pedagogical Sheet

Promoting sensory awakening in nursery schools: the sensory wall Section of the module / E

Contact : JP Marty



1. Context

Ordinary nursery schools. Children aged from 0 to 5 years.

2. Goals

- Experimenting sensory situations
- Differentiating senses
- Discovering one's environment and paying attention to it
- Manipulating and recognizing various objects
- Becoming an integral part of a group, respecting other children
- Having fun

Sensory walls' main asset is the opportunity to modulate them both on content and form. Between a child with a motor disability, one with autistic disorders or another one with a visual impairment, the goals set for using the sensory wall are different and evolve according to the tastes and to pedagogical issues. Walls look thus different in shape and size, but also in their content.

For people in wheelchairs, it will be important to create an accessible wall, for a child with autistic and sensory disorders, one will focus on a sensation-rich content and for visually impaired children, a content with many products in black and white.

3. Conduct

- **Team composition:**

Staff specialized in early childhood, depending on the country (for France: Childcare Assistant, Infant or young children educator, people with a degree in early childhood care or equivalent, Child care worker, Psycho-motor therapist, Educational and Social Coach, Psychologist etc ...)

Group of 5 to 6 children according to the size of the sensory wall

Material: Visible at the end of the presentation.

Duration: To be adapted according to the children's disabilities

Title of the educational activity: "sensory wall"



Equipment:

- **1st step: find the appropriate support:** In terms of material, we recommend a wooden board. Depending on what you want to put on it, and whether you intend to hang it or not, it's up to you to choose a more or less thick board.
- In terms of size, everything is possible! Square, rectangular, oval format, placed on the floor or hung on the wall ... It's up to you to decide whether to paint it or not. Shops offer some in 91 * 31 cm format on which sound, tactile and visual panels can be added.
- **2nd step: equipping with different types of fasteners**
- Glue, eye-screw, velcro fastener, hook screw, magnet ... All possible fasteners that are to be chosen according to the presented product. Also think of the upgradeability of the wall. And of course, the do-it-yourself kit: chisel, cutter, string, Blue Tack, sticky tape, etc.
- In the photo below, sensory balls were installed using hook screws. And the unbreakable mirror with double-sided adhesive tape.



- **3rd step: choosing sound, tactile, visual elements**

Sensory walls can be:

- An assortment of sound, tactile and visual elements. One can also focus on one sense, or two.
- An assortment of elements around a theme: seasons, colours, sea, planes, cooking ... Everything is possible!
- An assortment of elements linked to learning a skill: locks / latches / laces to work on fine motor skills, sticking rough letters to learn how to read, buzzers to develop the cause-and-effect relationship, etc.

Following are some ideas:

- Tactile elements: feathers, pebbles, pieces of tapestry, Fischer tips, embossed paper or sandpaper, tassels, pebbles, grass, leaves, corks or plastic stoppers, buttons, sponge, rough letters, sensory balls, seashells, locks, latches, padlocks, vibrating objects, sensory brush, tactile panels, cotton, bubble paper etc.
- Sound elements: buzzers, recorder buttons, musical instruments, thunder tube, sonic bullets, rain stick, sound panels ...
- Visual elements: mirrors, spotlights, visual panels, UV products, glossy paper, aluminium, CD ...
- Olfactory elements: cinnamon stick, aromatic herbs, vanilla ...



On this wall: infinite luminous mirror, thunder tube, unbreakable mirrors, tentacle ball, buzzers recorders, luminous buzzers, foot massage mats, cotton balls, Spring-a-Ling, etc ...

Pictures of some achievements...





Setting up and session conduct:

In order to set up a sufficiently containing framework, it is necessary to establish temporal and spatial guidelines such as:

- In the space where the workshop is taking place, a corner is furnished with chairs and benches (this is only one example, the important thing is to delimit the space of the activity), curtains are drawn.
- Children enter this space
- They go and sit in the previously set up corner
- You can sing a nursery rhyme to mark the beginning of the workshop (with associated gestures: nose, ears, mouth, hands, feet, head)

These rituals bring a rhythmicity and enable to differentiate the times of the session.

Various sensory stimulations are proposed thanks to the sensory wall and can be completed according to your imagination.

- View, by using light for example: room light, flashlight, colour light, reflections, shadows, game on colours, shapes
Hearing: sounds, musical instruments
Touch: soft / hard, smooth / rough, cold / warm
Smell
Taste: sweet / salty
- Several senses are involved during each session. It is necessary to repeat the same experiences at each session so that they can be "assimilated", then others can be gradually added. Stimulations and sensory situations are to be adapted to the evolution of the children in the workshop.

4. Evaluation

This activity requires a quiet environment and a limited number of pupils in order to avoid all potential sources of distraction for the child. This activity can be easily diversified and doesn't require a very high cost in its design.

5. Limits

Each professional must make sure to regulate the group and to show several examples.

6. Prospects

Following the same idea, it is possible to create sensory bottles. The principle is simple: use plastic bottles to create toys that stimulate the development of the senses of young children, mainly the auditory and visual senses. One can use one's imagination for the filling material, using everything the kitchen cupboard and the arts and crafts kit can provide.

The child then has fun manipulating the bottles, weighing them, shaking to listen to the noise, flipping them over to look at the objects or the liquid moving inside. It's simple, fun, educational and it appeals to toddlers and even to the older ones.

Attention, to secure the bottles, you must put on the contour inside the cap some glue safe for children and then screw it! Let stand a few hours to make sure the plastic is well bonded.