

9

Teacher Tested
Strategies
to
Prepare Your
AUTISM
CLASSROOM

Plus 10 Essential Materials to Order When Setting Up



Autism
Classroom.com

Classrooms teaching students with autism should have basic items in place to help each student be successful in the school environment. Detailed, step-by-step information about setting up a classroom for students with autism or for students with similar needs is in our book [How to Set Up a Classroom for Students with Autism \(Third Edition\)](#) or try our new signature teacher prep course [Foundation to Impact](#).

Here are 9 teacher tested strategies to put in place to prepare an autism classroom:

Schedule

A classroom schedule should be posted that reflects at least the following: independent work time, 1:1 (or 2:1) work time, small group instruction, social skills instruction, sensory play, structured play/structured recreation-leisure opportunities, fine motor work opportunities, personal management opportunities, limited large group activities.

An Effective Classroom Set Up/Engineered Environment for Students with Autism

An engineered environment created specifically to meet the needs of students with autism is critical to the success of your classroom program. These items, such as individualization, organization, visual supports & creating boundaries, should be seen, utilized and programmed into the daily operations of the class.

Data Collection System

A data collection system should be in place to measure each student's IEP (Individualized Education Plan) objectives. IEP objectives will need to be measured using effective data collection methods. Data collection sheets should be ready for the start of school.

Written Plan for Classroom Roles and Responsibilities

Your classroom should have a posted written plan that designates the major responsibilities each staff member assumes. This plan should also include the areas of the classroom each staff member is responsible for during the instructional parts of the day. For example, running the art lesson, recording attendance, preparing the snack time lesson, supporting the language lesson, preparing the daily calendar, may be the types of responsibilities noted.

Weekly Scheduled Debriefing Sessions

It is extremely important to meet with your team members concerning the needs and issues of your students. Suggested topics during this session are discussion of students, review and revising communication strategies, teaching strategies, behavior interventions, scheduling and classroom roles and responsibilities. Input from all staff members should be encouraged to help create a successful learning environment for staff as well as for students.

3-Step Prompting Series

Use this series when making requests of students. Post it on the wall to remind staff of the technique.

Language Based Techniques/Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

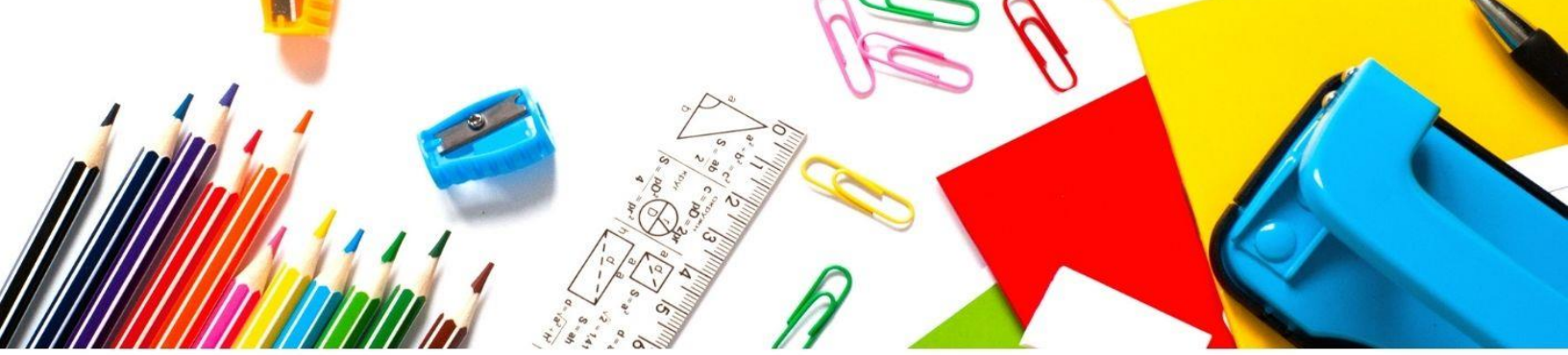
These techniques and strategies must be embedded in all activities throughout the child's day. AAC methods can include picture symbol task analysis, picture exchange, natural aided language techniques, visual cues for behaviors, picture symbols, photographs, written words (if the child is reading), etc.

A Written Behavior Plan

A plan should be in place for each child's targeted behaviors. If students have inappropriate behavior(s), there should be a plan for dealing with that behavior(s). All staff members in your class should have a copy of the behavior plans. The behavior plans can be very short or extensive depending on the needs of the student. Behavior plans can cover information as minor as "what to do when the child keeps taking off their shoe" to something as major as aggression, hitting, kicking etc. In each case, you will want to conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment to develop a Behavior Intervention Plan. The behavior plans should be a written plan of action so that each member of your classroom team responds in the same way to a behavior.

Sensory Issues

Sensory issues should be addressed throughout the school day. Sensory issues should be identified for each child, when applicable, and programmed for and incorporated in the daily schedule.



10 Essential Materials to Order When Setting Up Your Autism Classroom

- Printer
- Ink/Toner
- Laminator
- Paper
- Velcro or Alternative Brand Adhesive Strips or Dots
- Folders & Binders
- 2 Pairs of Good Scissors
- Permanent Marker
- Zippered Baggies (various sizes)
- Clear Packing Tape



Thank You!

I hope you found this list of strategies and checklist helpful. I'd love to hear about it! Come tell me about your classroom prep on Instagram [@autismclassroom](https://www.instagram.com/autismclassroom) and use the hashtag [#myclassroomsetup](https://www.instagram.com/hashtag/myclassroomsetup) or [#autismteacherprep](https://www.instagram.com/hashtag/autismteacherprep)

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