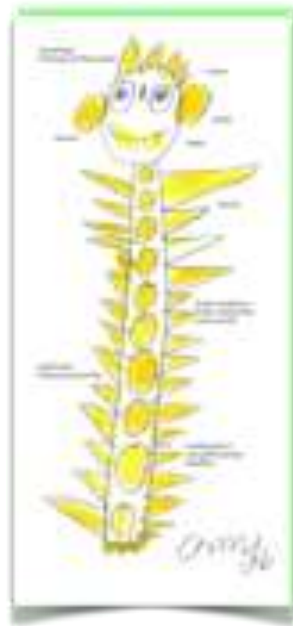


Info Exchange Magazine



Apps Alert & **Sensory Surprises**



No. 57 - October 2015

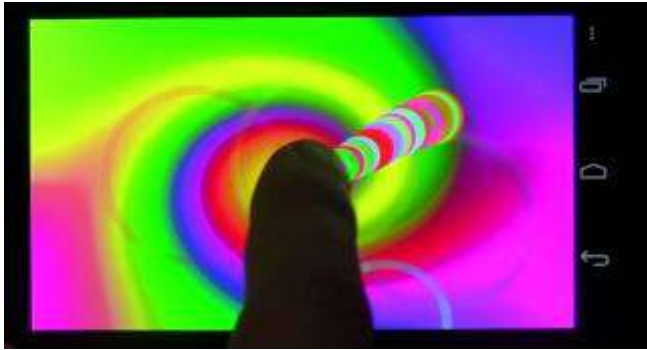
Apps are described as **Free** or **Lite** indicates that the app is free as of time of locating it for the newsletter. Some apps may be for Android devices, as well as for iPads.



Ripples for Toddlers

Ignore the word toddler, this is a very bright visual stimulation that works with a fingertip or swipe. There are various sound backgrounds, rather cloying but

switch off sound if this is irritating.



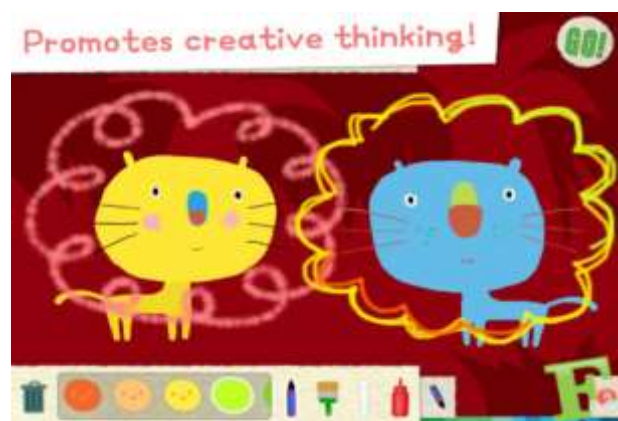
Watch a short demonstration on YouTube here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_otpiOreEMI



Squiggles from Lazoo! Free

A well-executed, colourful and cheerful app that offers mark making without any pressure. Just draw a squiggle or make a mark, and the app will do the rest. The app gives an opportunity to use imagination and encourages free style mark making. There are 14 drawing pages which act as a canvas for drawing squiggles. Once you have squiggled on a canvas, it then comes to life in the form of animated cars, fish, birds, and all sorts of fun things. Watch a short video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1vaD58cZ2pM>





Ookii Squiggles

This app is the next stage on, as it is still using squiggles but is starting to structure the lines. A dinosaur is the main character.



Kido Magic Finger

This is a favourite of mine because it takes my fingerprint and creates, thus encouraging me to try too. Finger is so named because when you touch a screen (five different scenes), fingerprints turn into animals and colour in the outlines. By using single-touch and multi-touch technology, results can be seen with one finger or two fingers, making the game that

much more entertaining. Along with the first level of creating animals, you can also learn how to spell new words, building basic vocabularies.

The app offers:

- Single-touch and multi-touch technology
- Two modes of play
- Five scenes
- Images from fingerprints
- Fun sound effects



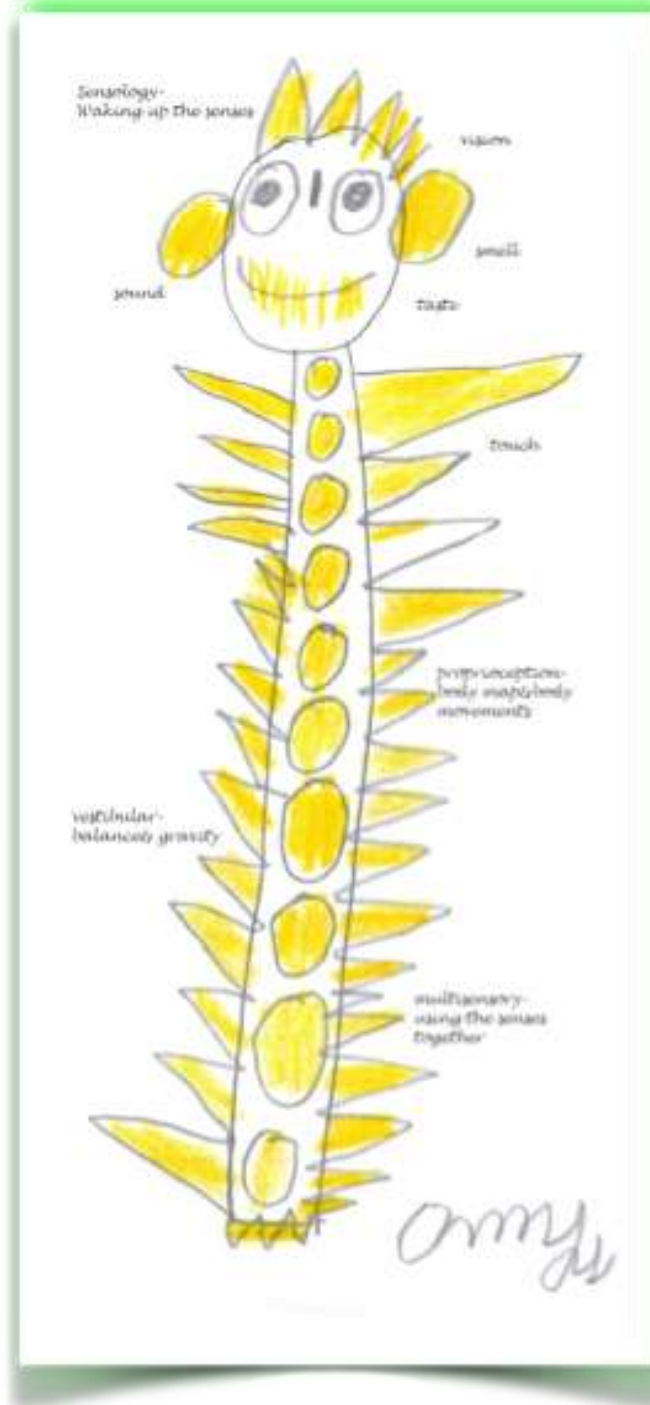
It is also ad-free and no in-app purchases. Protected well done! Magic fingers short demo below!



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tw8wlcwQDXc>

Info Exchange

Sensory Surprises



Exploring the Senses

A recent article on multisensory environments and what is the latest on offer. The article was written by Sal Mckeown in the magazine '*Special World*' May 2014 issue. Download the article at the link below:

[http://flolonghorn.com/images/stories/PDFs/Exploring the senses article.pdf](http://flolonghorn.com/images/stories/PDFs/Exploring%20the%20senses%20article.pdf)

Below an amazing Italian health club water area in Gubbio. Why can't our designers in the UK move away from the child staring into a bubble tube or a deep sea diver projected onto a wall!



Simple Apps Using Cause and Effect



A short video showing 4 free apps with cause and effect.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jf-7zd16Iuo>

MOUTHING

An occasional article from Info Exchange Editor, Flo Longhorn, about 'unusual behaviours'. This one is about 'mouthing'.

One of the most frequent questions I am asked on my travels is the question about some very special children (and adults) getting obsessed with mouthing everything they are given. They seem to be stuck at a very early level of development and find it hard to move on to other activities. The next natural step, following mouthing, is to take the object that is being mouthed-away from the mouth. Then the child can have a good look and feel of the object ready for the next step of playing with it.



Here is an account of a visit I made to a special school in Ireland to meet Pete, a real 'mouther'! The challenge was to get him to look and regard rather than eat everything!

Mouthing

I was in a special school in Ireland when the teacher asked me for some help with a four year old called Pete. The problem was that he put everything into his mouth. I was taken to a busy classroom, which held a mixed group of children including Pete. He was placed next to another child who was busy building towers of wooden bricks and knocking them down with great glee. As I watched, Pete managed to mouth cubes, his fingers and the sleeve of his jumper. His teacher was concerned that even when she stayed with him, the lesson ended in his mouth. Whilst his teacher watched, I worked with Pete trying a variety of sensory interventions.

Here is an outline of what Pete and I worked on together, using sensory materials and also aiming work at his simple level of development. While he was not ready to enjoy building brick towers yet, he was ready to:

- ♣ Find out what his hands could do rather than his mouth
- ♣ Bring his hands in front of him to play
- ♣ Have pleasure with materials
- ♣ Explore and discover the sensory world in front of him
- ♣ Have fun and also succeed!

Pete's mouth-free activities

(with encouragement, praise and his jumper removed!)

Pete's hands and fingers were woven together with my hands using stretchy pieces of wool and elastic. This meant our fingers were 'tied' together and were too bulky for him to put in his mouth. Pete was bemused by this, had a good look at our tied hands and

started to wriggle his hands and fingers to release the wool and elastics. He was watching and observing what was happening as our hands became looser. After a while our fingers became free and Pete picked up some wool and twirled it in the air.

I then took a large plastic sweetie jar and filled it with different textured sponges. I took his hands and wedged them into the jar of sponges. Again, Pete found it fascinating to look as he wriggled his hands and also felt the sponge textures on his hands. He could also bang the bottle on the table and make a great noise. If he tried to take it to his mouth he couldn't get it in! Later we could think about putting each hand in a separate bottle, each filled with a very different texture-and then onto his feet so he looked at another part of his body he could use to learn!

Releasing his hands from the bottle, I popped them into a sensory sleeve. This is a simple tube of net open at both ends with elasticised cuffs. Inside the net sleeve I placed lots of noisy squeakers and slimy worms. His arms were inserted in each end so his hands could play but the net sleeve prevented the toys going in his mouth. So Pete had other sensations to discover, squeaky sounds and wriggly worms.

I left the teacher with ideas for a 'mouth' box for Pete. His mouth box was to form the basis for a collection of sensory materials that were attractive to Pete but not good to put in the mouth. These materials could be played with and explored by Pete. The materials I suggested were a prickly rubber hedgehog, 'pop' socks filled with sand and rice (securely tied) a metal scourer and a piece of stiff net. The teacher could add to these when she found materials that he liked but would not be good to mouth.

I hope Pete has moved beyond mouthing by now, perhaps he has found his toes to mouth instead!

Flo Longhorn

p.s. Another tip I was given to help those children who mouth is to teach them to stroke with their hands. This gives them a way of gaining information from the object rather than stroking it with their tongues!



Pica Eating and the Senses



Pica eating is when a child or adult eats anything without discrimination. They will eat objects that may be inedible and seek out things to eat, wherever they are. One way to help this to cease is through sensory integration.

Sensory integration is a neurological process that occurs in all of us. Sensory information is taken from our bodies and the world around-the brain is programmed to organise or 'integrate' the sensory information to make it meaningful. This informs thinking and reasoning.

With regard to pica, eating has really gone out of kilter. Developmentally, the mouth is the first area of the body that can interpret sensory feedback with some accuracy; the mouth discovers the world through actions such as sucking, tasting, smelling, texture, temperature. As the baby matures then the hands take over and interpret the environment around. Mouthing becomes less important-unless you are a pica eater! The mouth then continues to be an overwhelming door to sensory delights of every sort. I worked with Patti, a young woman who managed to eat two forks!

The pica eater mouths, chews, tastes, swallows edible and inedible- anything that will fit in the mouth. This unusual eating may be because they crave strong tactile sensations, strong mouth movements and to also feel the vibratory sensations to the jaw, which is rather pleasing and stimulates the vibration-sensitive balance system. I worked with one adult in an institution, who chomped on rocks to gain this sensation-we offered the alternative of large gob stoppers, bubble gum and very hard rubber dog toys. A pica child I also interacted with, found that sherbet lemons were great as there was the hardness of the sweet and then the shock of the sherbet! So much for healthy eating! She also liked very strong vibration along the jaw provided by vibrating toothbrushes. In both cases, they were offered the alternatives to pica -eating anything- with a 'pica' box of their particular likes that lessened the unsuitable eating. This included foods with high textures too such as wooden liquorice sticks from the herbalist.

So, the best person to help with pica is the occupational therapist or someone trained in this area of sensory integration, they can provide a 'sensory diet' for the person and monitor over time.

Good books to look at:

- ✓ 'Building bridges: through sensory integration' by Ellen Yack et al.
- ✓ 'Too loud too bright too fast too tight' by Sharon Heller.

From the internet, a serious presentation:
Implications and Strategies for Dealing with Mouthing
by Geoff Bowen, Psychologist SCRC

View the presentation at:

<http://www.slideserve.com/michel/implications-and-strategies-for-dealing-with-mouthing>

Funded by:
Department for
Education

The AAC Self-Assessment Tool-Kit

A project based in Cumbria

Produced by
Communication and Learning Enterprises



Click here
for CandLE
Website.

In collaboration with:

Helen Dixon Cumbria PCT
James Rennie School Carlisle
Mayfield School Whitehaven
George Hastwell School Barrow-In-Furness
Sandside Lodge School Ulverston
Sandgate School Kendal
Also thanks to Ulverston Victoria High School



Symbols: **Widgit**

Click above for Widgit Website.

Have a look at this AAC self-assessment tool produced by Candle and a variety of northern schools. It was funded by the UK department of Education. Well worth a browse for some very useful information. A collaborative effort, well done!

http://www.candleaac.com/AAC_Self-Assessment_Tool-Kit_Home_Page.htm



Pictorial Cooking Recipes

These pictorial cooking recipes were found at the TES website and put up there by 'skybluedavid' who says:

'I have developed a range of simple pictorial recipes for pupils with learning difficulties to use in their cooking. Each recipe has large colour images of the main ingredients and of each stage during preparation and cooking. I have also included a scheme of work with some BLP targets. These pictorial recipes are suitable for KS1 and KS2 pupils to use.'

They are clear, simple and concise. They could be easily laminated for the chef who is ready to use recipes. A couple of samples can be seen below.

<https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/pictorial-cooking-recipes-6447944>

Pizza Base

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 packet of yeast | 150ml warm water | 1 level tablespoon margarine | 1 level teaspoon sugar | 225g plain or bread flour | 1 level teaspoon salt |

1. Add flour, sugar, salt and margarine into a mixing bowl. 
2. Mix together and add the dried yeast. 
3. Add the water and stir together with a spoon. 
4. Put the dough onto a floured surface and knead. 
5. Cover the dough with cling film and leave for 30 minutes. 

Simple shortbread

| | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |
| 200g margarine | 100g caster sugar | 300g plain flour |

1. Heat oven to 190C. 
2. Beat the sugar and margarine together until smooth with a spoon. 
3. Stir in the flour with a spoon so the mixture looks like breadcrumbs. 
4. Put on the work surface and roll flat with a rolling pin. 
5. Cut into circles with a cutter and put on a baking tray. 
6. Bake in oven for 20 minutes and put on a rack to cool. 

Here is a list of the recipes available

- Banana Cakes.docx
- Cheesy Vegetable bake.docx
- Chicken Fajitas.docx
- Chocolate Brownies.docx
- Cooking scheme of work.docx

- Egg Noodles Sri Lankan Style.docx
- Flapjacks.docx
- Friendly Fish pie.docx
- Fruit Scones.docx
- Mince Pies.docx
- Pancakes.docx
- Pizza Base.docx
- Pizza Toppings.docx
- Sausage Rolls.docx
- Simple shortbread.docx
- Vegetable Lasagne.docx
- Vegetable soup.docx

4. Vegetable Soup



1. Peel the potato, carrot, parsnip and onion.



2. Carefully chop all the vegetables into chunks.

3. Put 500ml of water into a saucepan and bring to the boil.



Thank you skybluedavid for sharing!

Autumnal Food



A tray of oats becomes a smell delight. As the oats are sprinkled, mixed and stirred the aroma of a mixture of spices is awakened. There is also scope for imaginative play of the cake containers are filled with oats and topped with a small sweetie. Lots of maths as well if spoons of different sizes are added. Further ideas from: <http://www.fun-a-day.com/pumpkin-pie-sensory-play/>

Materials to collect:

- Oats
- Pumpkin pie spice or a mixture such as cinnamon, ginger, cloves
- Smarties or dolly mixtures
- Small plastic containers
- Tongs
- Measuring cups and spoons

Then, after a while, see what happens when warm water is added, for a different smell and texture and playful time!

Apple Sandwiches



You will need an apple corer to make the best apple sandwiches, then experiment with a peanut butter sandwich or use your imagination.



... and apple mouths with almond teeth!

ooblecks

These ooblecks were found at the website <http://www.housingaforest.com>.



Ooblecks are fascinating scientific experiments using corn flour to dramatic effect. Here is some of the scientific bump, followed by scientific fun!
<http://www.instructables.com/id/Oobleck>



Glowing ooblecks

Ooblecks made with tonic water so they glow in the dark! Found at:

<http://www.funathomewithkids.com/2013/08/edible-glowing-oobleck>



SeeAbility



Eyes and Special Children and Adults

I am always struck by how few children I see wearing glasses in special settings in the UK. This is in contrast with special children in other countries such as Belgium and the Scandinavian countries.

If I took my glasses off now and tried to work, I would have to scrunch my eyes and find strategies to avoid not being able to see what I am doing. I am sure I would have a headache after a while and go to find headache remedy. If you are special then actually saying that you find it hard to see is probably insurmountable. So the onus is on responsible adults to ensure that eyes are tested on a regular basis to ensure a most essential component of learning is up and running-the eyes!

In my first headship at a special school I lured a young and enthusiastic optometrist into school with the lure of a school dinner and the satisfaction of detecting visual problems in the most special of children. They were then referred for substantial investigation at the local eye hospital. Glasses were everywhere!

Below is an article from 'SeeAbility' about the distinct lack of even eye testing in a school setting, for example. They found nearly 4 in 10 pupils had no records of any eye tests. So before a child begins to even tackle learning, eyes are eliminated as a source of help. A fuzzy world in which to learn.

Sign the petition for eye tests for special people!
<https://www.seeability.org/petition>



Article from The SeeAbility Website

Thousands of vulnerable children with disabilities are missing out on crucial eye care, despite the high risk of sight problems.

New research from SeeAbility, shows nearly four in ten (37%) pupils attending special schools have no history of eye tests. This alarming figure is made worse as children with learning disabilities are 28 times more likely to have serious sight problems than other children.

There are 100,000 children in special schools in England and if these findings are replicated nationwide 37,000 children with disabilities are missing out on the eye care they need. If eye problems are undetected children's sight will be at risk.

The statistics are in our new report '**An equal right to sight**' published on 18 September 2015 as part of our '**Children in Focus Campaign**' launch. SeeAbility says it's unacceptable that there is no national plan to meet the eye care needs of children with disabilities. See the report here: https://www.seeability.org/uploads/files/Children_in_Focus_campaign/Equal_right_to_sight.pdf. Find out more about the campaign here: <https://www.seeability.org/children-in-focus>.

"We are calling on the government to make sight tests available in every special school in England. Children with profound disabilities may not be able to tell someone they have a sight problem, or get to a high street optician. Let's bring much needed eye care to them instead," says David Scott-Ralphs, SeeAbility Chief Executive.

"We want people to join our **Children in Focus Campaign** and sign the petition on our website. This will be handed in to the Department of Health as this is a major health inequality that the government and NHS have a responsibility to address."

The report draws evidence from the charity's research project with Cardiff University's School of Optometry and Vision Science. SeeAbility's team has been delivering specialist sight tests to pupils in a cluster of London based special schools since October 2013.

The pilot scheme has since extended to seven schools. One place to benefit from the important work of the **Children in Focus Campaign** is The Village School in North London.

Their head teacher, Kay Charles says, "Every child in this country has the right to a free eye test. We need to look at these things in depth and change it for the better because thousands of children are missing out and they are the most vulnerable in our society. That has got to be wrong."

SeeAbility gave Brandon - a pupil at The Village School - his first ever sight test at the age of 16. It was found that he could not see out of his right eye. If Brandon had received treatment before the age of seven he might be able to see perfectly today. While we can do nothing but support Brandon, we have been able to dramatically improve the lives of other children.

Lana has profound disabilities and cannot move or speak. Her sight test revealed that her vision is blurred, but Lana's new glasses allow her to focus better and access a high tech system called an Eye Gaze. It means she can now communicate with her world.

David Scott-Ralphs continues, "The government needs to make it easier for children with disabilities to get a sight test. Making sight tests available in every special school in England would be a start in making the reforms needed and help thousands of children with disabilities."

Watch the Campaign video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=grIsEsXEPeI>

If you want to support SeeAbility's **Children in Focus Campaign**, see <https://www.seeability.org/children-in-focus>.

Then sign our petition here: <https://www.seeability.org/petition>
or tweet #EqualRightToSight @seeability.

You can also make a £5 donation by texting **SEE** to **70004**.

Sign the petition!

<https://www.seeability.org/petition>

<https://www.seeability.org/who-we-are/media-centre/news/vulnerable-children-with-disabilities>



Warren School Media Productions

Warren school in Suffolk, is at the cutting edge of technology when it comes to using technology with its special pupils. I came upon the videos whilst looking for something else on YouTube. I found myself, an hour later, still watching agog at the amazing films they have made.

I have just watched one of the latest films, 'Romeo and Juliet' and was transported to Italy with the fabulous backgrounds and also the brilliant acting by students. A sense of humour is also seen in the Shakespearian interpretation with Juliet described as hot and the nurse gives a hoot of a performance!

I contacted Kevin Wilson, deputy head at Warren school, with questions about the excellent videos, films and animation I had just watched. He said:

'We are fortunate that our Technician has a degree in Media/Animation and leads sessions two days a week. One of the classes won an award last year for their video on the environment. There is no SEN category in Suffolk and they were in against the mainstream Secondary Schools. They received the full red carpet treatment which we then repeated in school with 'Oscars'. Students, parents/carers and staff were very proud!'

A scene from 'Peter and the Wolf'



A scene from 'A Guide to Road Safety'.



'Romeo and Juliet' - the latest epic!



Click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a76XTBwIxdk>

This is my favourite because of the total involvement of the very special students and staff in the film, quite extraordinary!



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rj7YSv0v4kA>

For all the videos, films and animation enrol here:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/WarrenSchoolMedia>