

Discussion Starter:

Autism

Awareness

A mini-reader & Lesson Ideas
Created by: Primarily All-Some© 2013 & 2014

Autism Facts

1. The US center for Disease Control (CDC) estimate that 1 in 68 children are diagnosed with Autism.
 2. Boys are 4 times more likely to be diagnosed with Autism than girls.
 3. Communicating is especially hard for students with Autism.
 4. About forty percent of children who are diagnosed with autism do not speak.
 5. Others might speak, but not until later in childhood.
 6. Many say that "if you've met a child with Autism, you've met one child with Autism" meaning that how Autism looks in each person can greatly differ. Just because one student with Autism has a certain characteristic, doesn't mean that every student will have the characteristic.
 7. The rate of autism has steadily grown over the last twenty years
 8. Autism is the fastest growing developmental disorder, yet most underfunded
 9. Children with autism do make progress; early intervention can help greatly.
- Autism is treatable, not a hopeless condition
10. Remember people first language. He or she is a person with Autism, not an Autistic person. The person has Autism; the Autism doesn't have the person.
- Many facts were taken from the National Autism Association Fact sheet.



Companion Lesson Plans

*Have an open conversation with your class. Since Autism's prevalence has risen dramatically, chances are your students know first hand someone with Autism.

*What is their experience? What do they know about Autism? Do they have any difficulty with anything? Do they possess any strong talents? Remember not to judge what they say, as everyone has different experiences. Just clear up any misconceptions, and help them answer the questions that they have. Students should know that they "can't catch Autism."

*Autism is no one's fault. Scientist do not yet know what causes Autism. They are currently researching several ideas that they have about what causes Autism but do not have concrete answers yet.

*Have students plan a "light it Up Blue" Day and encourage them all to wear blue.

*Brainstorm ways for your students to help any students at the school to make their day easier... (practice reading to these students, social skill activities) Please realize that some things your students suggest although, while well meaning, will not be appropriate. Teachers for students with Autism are trying to get their students to be as independent as possible. Therefore, if your students brainstorm ideas like picking up their lunch trash, or holding hands with them to walk them to recess, those activities would be counter productive. Please talk to the teachers of any students to get any specifics about certain students, but also be cognizant of any privacy laws that may exist in your area.

* My absolutely favorite activity to do with my students is after having a lesson on descriptive words, I ask my students to write down positive things about each other in the class. Everyone has to say at least one kind thing about another student. Everyone hands their pages into me and I use the website WORDLE to create a word cloud of all of the wonderful things said about them. I laminate them and give them on the last day. The students love it, but the parents usually love it more, knowing that other children can see their child in the same way they do is a wonderful experience for them.

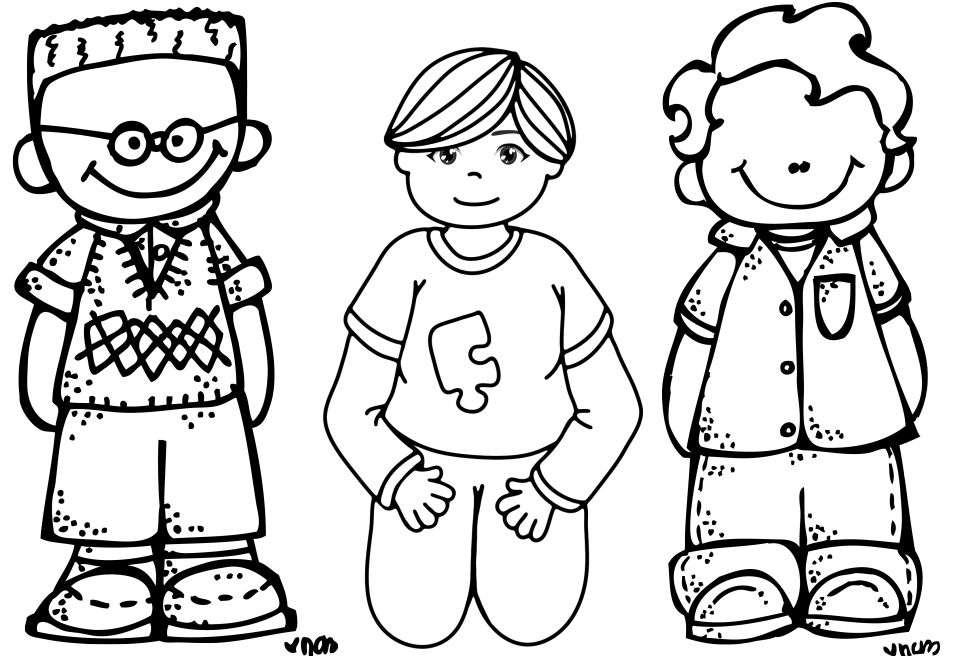




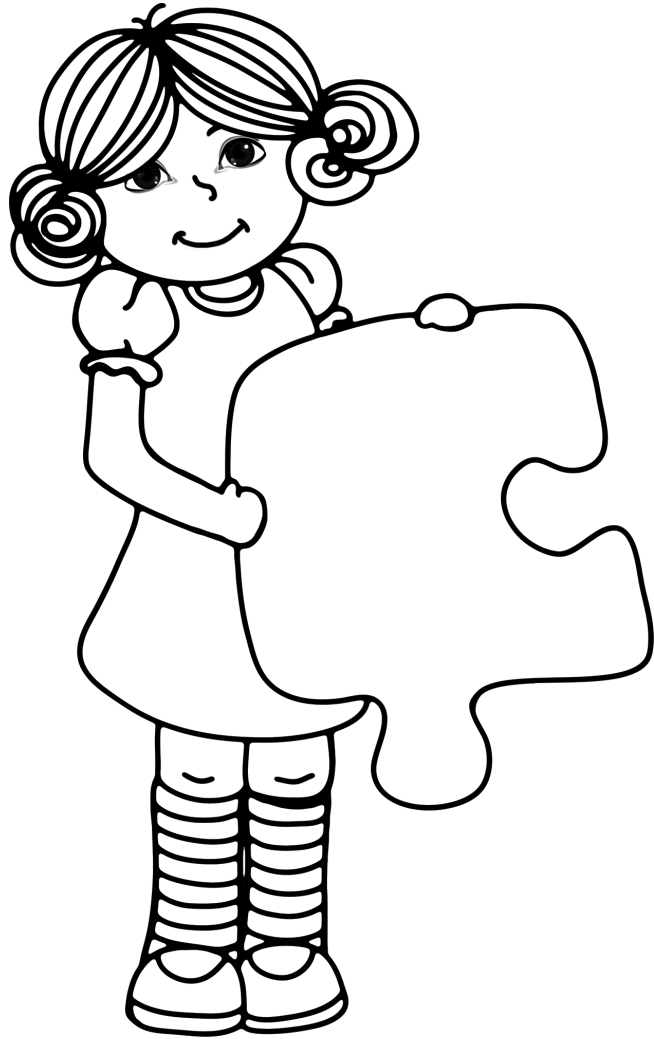
What is Autism?

A Mini-Reader to Spread Awareness

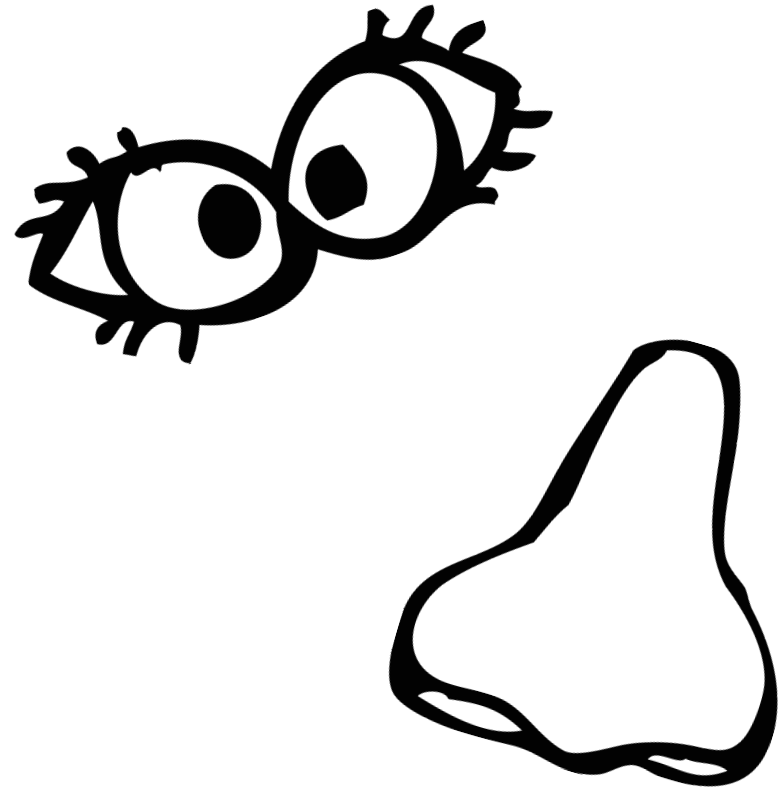
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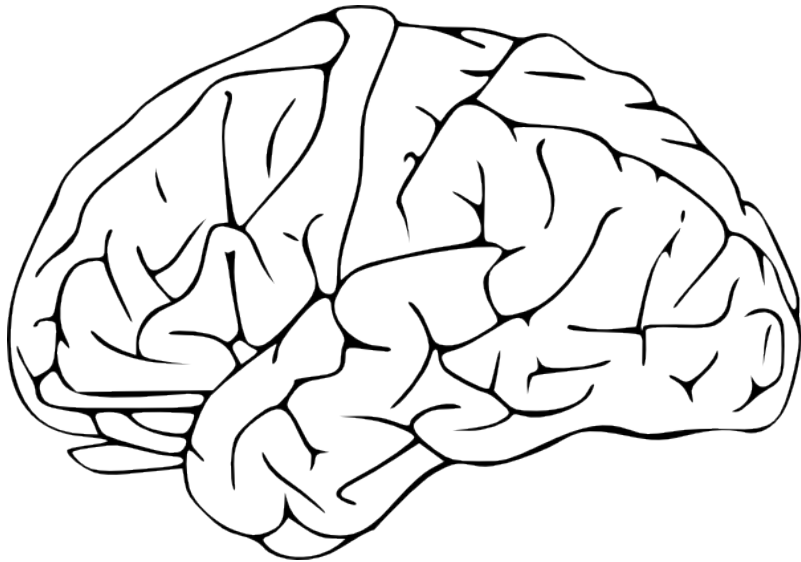
Autism is something you are born with.
You either have Autism or you don't. You
"can't catch Autism"



Think about your brain as a machine.
Your brain controls everything you
do, your thoughts and feelings, the
way your body moves and more.



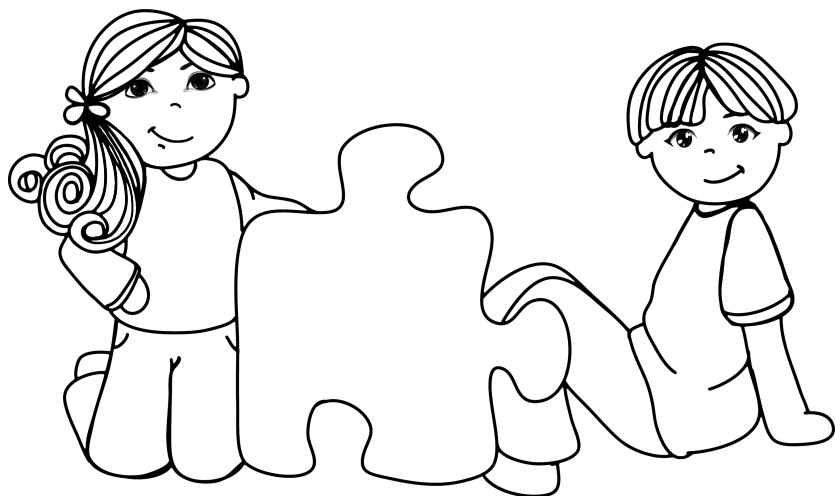
Your brain is like your operating system. It
does things you tell it to do, and also does
things that you don't even tell it to do, like
blinking and breathing. It is just hard wired
to do those things. .



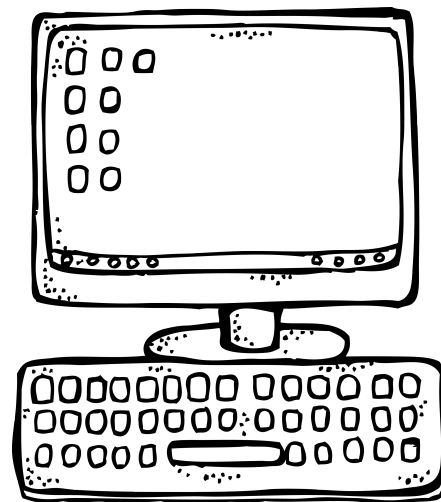
People with Autism are the same way.
They use their brain for everything too.
But their brain is wired differently.
Things that make your brain react one
way, will often make their brain react a
completely different way.



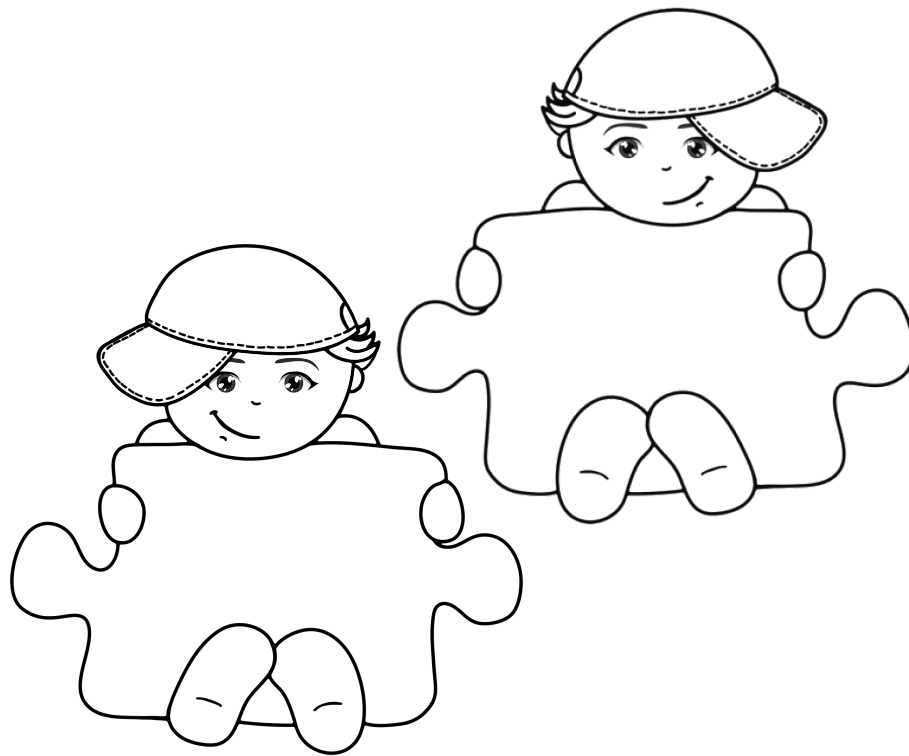
This makes lots of things hard for people
with Autism. Their brains have a hard time
reading social cues (smiles, frowns, sad
faces, etc.) They usually have a hard time
making friends.



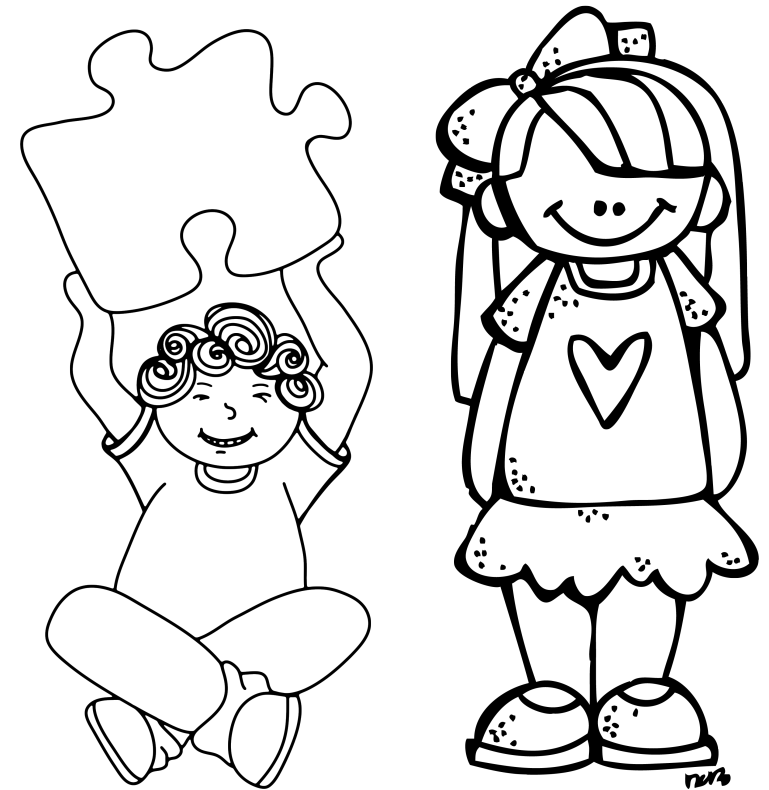
Trying new things can be difficult for people who have Autism. Things like communicating their wants and needs can be difficult. People with Autism can learn to do things that they struggle with, but their brains have to work much harder to be able to do them. Most of these things that they struggle with are things that we often take for granted.



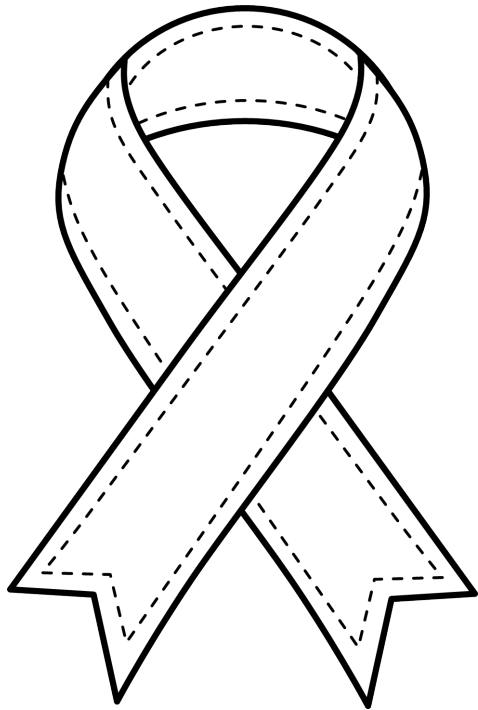
Since their brains are different they can also do some things better than other people. Usually people who have Autism are very talented with computers, music, and design.



It is important to remember that every person with Autism is different from the next person with Autism. Just because you've met someone with Autism, doesn't mean you know all the characteristics that can occur in every person that has been diagnosed with Autism.



Do you know someone with Autism? Take some time to get to know them. Remember they are just like you, but sometimes they have to work a little harder to do the same things that you do.



Brainstorm some ideas with your classmates on what you can do to raise Autism Awareness. The more people who know about Autism, the larger the acceptance can grow for those people who have Autism.

All That Legal Mumbo Jumbo ;)

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Again, Thank you! Have fun teaching!

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In Learning & Laughter,

Sarah Kieffer M.Ed.

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