

## Reflection on Sensory Break

Competency #32 Teacher will be able to design and implement an activity for students with exceptional learning needs; **Artifact:** Video of Calming Sensory Break

This was a video that I developed at the beginning of the Bachelor of Education Program. I didn't realize it would come in handy today but it has. During this video five techniques were demonstrated to help in regaining students' sense of calm. These techniques would be incorporated into the daily routine as a sensory break. There would be a block in the morning right when the day begins for 10-15 minutes before the learning takes place to utilize this sensory program. At the beginning of the year the teacher would prepare the students and teach them the 5 techniques. In addition, the students would be free to utilize one or more of the techniques during any point in the day where they require a sensory break to self-regulate. The student would be free to choose the activity that they feel would benefit them in their current situation that they are experiencing. The five activities are: Notice 5 things-what are 5 things you can see, feel, hear and touch and maybe smell. This helps release overwhelming feelings and stress and helps with sensory processing disorders. Draw your emotions-bringing awareness of what students are feeling. Octopus breathing-deep breathing to help calm heart rate and helps with physical feelings of anxiousness or hyperactivity to promote relaxation. Write it down and tear it up-writing down feelings when students don't want to share what is happening to help them vent. Tearing it up helps them release negative thoughts and helps with the process of letting go. A hug-with COVID this would be a hug-to-self. Physical touch can help restore a sense of calm. Teaching students to hug themselves can be used anywhere. It can improve their mood. A person's own touch promotes relaxation since it lowers levels of cortisol (the stress hormone) within the body and releases some tension in the body. This can also raise self-esteem. I believe these techniques can be used to benefit students that have exceptional learning needs. For example students with the learning disability, dyslexia when working on learning to read they can experience feelings of anxiousness and typically frustrations. Using these techniques can help these students clear their minds and be able to give the reading task another try after a break to regain self-regulation. We learned through the Special Education course that sensory breaks are needed to provide support for optimal learning by offering ways for students to regain control and calm. Sensory integration in the classroom plays an important factor in the social emotional and cognitive development within children. I believe not only students with exceptional learning needs, such as sensory processing disorders would benefit from this calming sensory break but it would also be useful for all students. Every person has a bad day where they could use some help with calming and self-regulation to help them focus on school related tasks and learning.