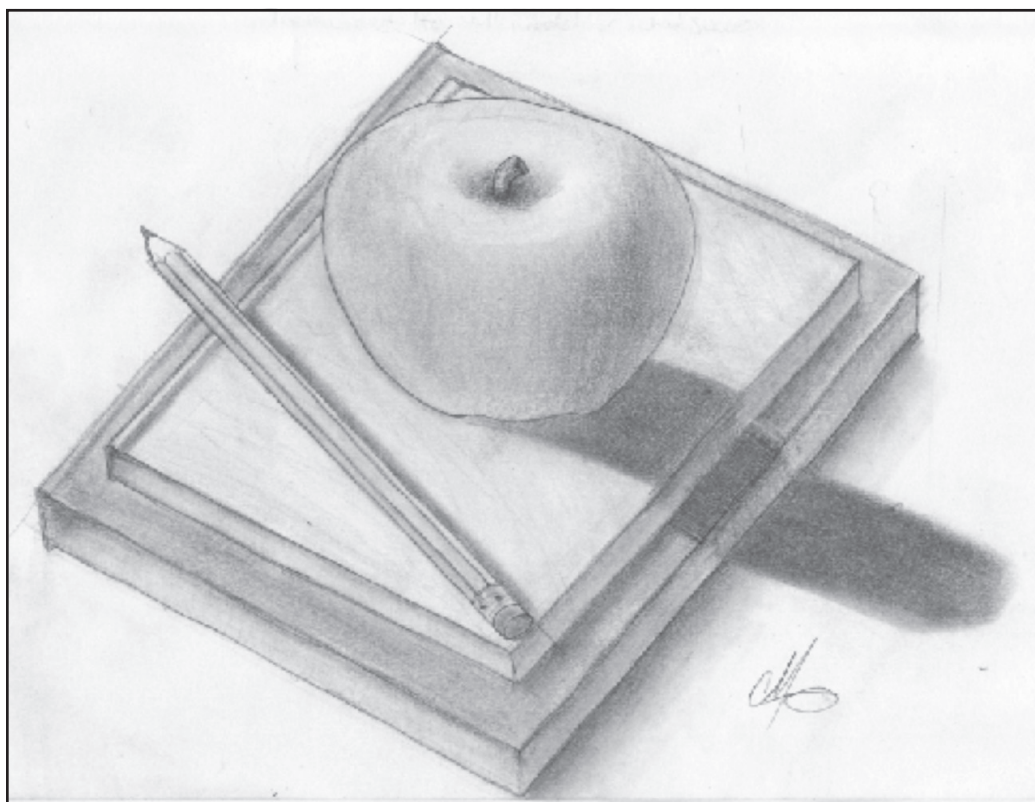


# **Autism: Attacking Social Interaction Problems**

**A Therapy Manual  
Targeting Social Skills in Children 10–12**

# 4

## The ABCs of Life: Skills Needed for School Success



### **RATIONALE**

With older children, we assume that the basic skills for school success are in place. However, the social educational demands increase yearly, thus requiring refinement of these skills and greater awareness of social expectations as well as increased independence. The following lessons are designed for the older student, to teach and reinforce the social skills of active listening, following directions, asking for help, and turn-taking that are needed for school success.

### **SKILLS ADDRESSED**

Interactive/Cooperative activities are provided for four weeks of intervention: active listening, following directions, asking for help, and topic maintenance.

## LESSON 1 OBJECTIVES

- Students will identify the parts of the body required for active listening.
- Students will verbalize appropriate responses to indicate listening.
- Students will demonstrate appropriate body language for listening.

## LESSON 1: ACTIVE LISTENING

### Materials

- *Active Listening Social Scripts 1–3*
- Props (glasses for teacher, man’s hat for father, large clip-on earrings for mother)
- Reinforcement tokens

### Activity A: Social Chat

Older children can be introduced to active listening by talking about the characteristics of active listening during *social chat* which include: giving good eye contact, asking related questions, keeping your body still, and nodding your head. The group leader should start by asking the following question: “How do you know if someone is listening to you?” Remember to use tokens, play money, and/or verbal praise to reinforce participation.

### **Activity B: Active Listening Social Scripts**

The characteristics of active listening can be demonstrated through role-playing different situations related to the school day. The group leader should assign students to play the role of the “listener” and the “speaker” in each of the three scenarios presented in which appropriate and inappropriate examples are given. After each short social script that is inappropriate, analyze the situation with the children by asking the following questions:

- What went wrong in this situation?
- Have you ever experienced a situation like the one described?
- What did you do?

The same two children should then role-play the appropriate way to use active listening in that situation. The use of props can add a sense of authenticity and fun to the scripts. The group leader should get props to complement each script, such as large colorful glasses for the teacher or a hat for the father or earrings for the mother. In addition, the role-play scripts can be videotaped for later review and discussion.

***Active Listening Social Script 1: Listening to the  
Teacher Give Instructions in a Classroom***

One student is assigned the role of “Robert” and another student is assigned the role of “Mrs. Barnes” the teacher in the following scripts. The student and teacher are interacting in the classroom.

**Inappropriate Scenario**

**Mrs. Barnes:** “Class, please turn to page 24 in your green language arts book and we will read aloud the first four paragraphs.”

**Robert** (*looking out the window*): “Mrs. Barnes, what was our assignment?”

**Mrs. Barnes** (*frowning*): “Robert, were you listening to my instructions?”

**Robert** (*feeling embarrassed*): “No, Mrs. Barnes.”

**Appropriate Scenario**

**Mrs. Barnes:** “Class, please turn to page 24 in your green language arts book and we will read aloud the first four paragraphs.”

**Robert** (*giving the teacher good eye contact*): “May I read first?”

**Mrs. Barnes** (*smiling*): “Yes Robert, you may read first.”

**Robert** (*feeling proud*): “Thank you, Mrs. Barnes.”