

Sensory World

Instructions: Sit down with friends and family to go through these questions together, sharing your answers with each other. The answers can be fun and often even surprising!

1. Imagine an apple. What do you see in your mind? Do you see anything? Or a rough shape, perhaps the shadow of an apple? Do you see any color for the apple? Does it have any texture or even a shine to it? A stem and leaves? Can you turn the image of the apple in your mind? Are there other things around the apple, such as a bowl or other fruit? If you struggle to create a visual image of an apple in your mind, you might have **aphantasia**. If you can visualize the apple in detail, perhaps even turning the apple in 3D, you might have **hyperphantasia**. Try this again with "horse" or another item.
2. When you read something, do you hear a voice in your head? Do you hear different voices for different characters? What about when you are just thinking about something; do you hear a voice then? This voice is called an **inner monologue**; some people have it, and some don't!
3. How easy is it for you to recognize faces? Do you need to look for a key feature, such as a scar, to recognize somebody? If somebody changes their hair, or removes their glasses, does this create a challenge for you? Do you recognize the faces of close friends, or even family? Can you recognize your own face in pictures? People with **Prosopagnosia (Face Blindness)** struggle to recognize faces – even their family members or even their own!
4. Can you hear lights humming overhead? Can you sometimes hear when something is plugged into an outlet? Do televisions or computer monitors have a high-pitch noise? Can the sound of food frying or paper rustling interfere with your ability to hear other things? People vary in their **sound sensitivity**; over the course of a day, some people can become exhausted or even have knots in their neck due to being in a room with the noisy lights and outlets.
5. Do your individual fingers have personalities? What about your toes? Does Friday have a different personality than Sunday? What about the number 9 or the number 4? **Personification** is one type of **synesthesia** that some people experience.
6. What color is Wednesday? What about the number 2? What color is March? How about July? Do any of these things have color for you? **Color-grapheme/concept** is a type of **synesthesia** our brains are initially born with, but it's "pruned" away by about 8 months of age for most people (but not all!).
7. Do you see shapes or colors when you listen to music? How about when you close your eyes? Does music have texture? This is a form of synesthesia similar to the above.
8. When you see somebody else physically hurt or ill, do you feel any physical sensations in your own body? What about people's emotions; do you feel those? Feeling what other people feel, especially physically, is called **mirror-touch synesthesia**.
9. Do you feel responsible for what other people are feeling, or the decisions they are making? Do some comedies make you cringe or uncomfortable for the characters? If somebody makes a poor decision, do you feel a sense of shame or regret even if you are not responsible? This could be related to having sensory processing sensitivity or having mirror-touch synesthesia – something referred to as the **Self-Other Theory**.
10. After interacting socially or in large groups, do you feel energized, or depleted?
11. If you place something on a shelf behind another object, how likely are you to forget it is there? Will you struggle finding it later? Do you or others in your house have a habit of leaving cupboard doors open? Does it seem easier find clothes on the floor instead of in a closet? All of these are related to the "object-permanence challenge" with **ADHD**, and there are some surprisingly easy solutions! Visit Open Path Education to learn more.



LEARN MORE

Open Path Education offers classes and resources on neurodiversity topics. The classes below are offered stand-alone or as part of the Parent Empowerment Project. Visit OpenPathEducation.com to learn more.



Sensory World*

Let's discuss how what we see (and hear, taste, feel) in the world might not be the same for everyone else. Topics include sensory processing sensitivity and other sensory traits such as face blindness, aphantasia, synesthesia – including misophonia and mirror-touch (empathy). Are you a highly sensitive person? Are autism, ADHD, and being HSP possibly related? How might having sensory processing sensitivity traits impact parenting styles? (Note, this can also relate to teaching and management styles!) Also learn about the self/other theory and how this might influence your perspectives and choices.



ADHD: Setting Up for Success*

In this class we explore how best to capitalize on the inherent strengths of ADHD life, particularly when it comes to mitigating some of their more well-known side effects, such as distractibility, disorganization, time management, and more. Learn how ADHD is a boon that can be utilized to uplift and empower our world, and how the challenges faced by those with ADHD are easily remedied by stepping outside of societal norms. Together we will explore some ways this situation might be changed.



Homeschool Quickstart

This class was originally designed for “accidental homeschoolers” – those who didn't plan on homeschooling but found themselves in a situation where it was suddenly necessary. They need a step-by-step guide to getting started while making the most that homeschooling has to offer. They want their children to be academically successful, while also seeing to their health and well-being. Even for those who did plan ahead for this, the steps in this class help parents work through the steps of getting started. This class is also helpful for parents redesigning their homeschool program to be more student-centric.

