

Guidance on Adapting Bizzy Breaks Activities

Below you will find some additional information on adapting Bizzy Breaks for different needs.

This is broad advice and should be used with the guidance of an OT or other professional as appropriate.

Note: While Bizzy Breaks contains many activities that can be used as part of therapeutic movement breaks for self-regulation, a more specialised training or specific programme may be beneficial and there are lots of these available (the various Education Centres have a number of trainings coming up in the near future specific to movement and sensory breaks).

Adapting activities: the **STEP** approach

As every child's needs are different, we recommend the **STEP** approach for adapting physical activity to suit the specific context. This is a useful acronym for considering aspects of the activity that could be changed to match children's abilities.

STEP:

- **Space** – Where does the activity take place? Where is the child positioned?
- **Task** – What is the goal of the activity? What is the child being asked to do?
- **Equipment** – What sort of equipment is used or could be used?
- **People** – Who else is involved?

One or several of these aspects can be changed to adapt an activity.

	Overview	Examples of ways to adapt the Bizzy Breaks activities
Space	<p><i>Where does the activity take place? Where is the child positioned?</i></p> <p>Bizzy Breaks activities are designed for use within the confines of a typical classroom seating arrangement, but they are not limited to this space.</p> <p>Most of the activities can be adjusted for sitting or standing. They could also be done on a stability ball instead of a chair.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving to the edge of the classroom away from desks and chairs to allow for freer movement with less obstacles. • Doing movement breaks in another room in a small group. • Doing the activity outside (also may be beneficial for additional sensory aspects). • If space allows, sitting on the floor cross legged or kneeling can help to stabilize the upper body.

<p>Task</p>	<p><i>What is the goal of the activity? What is the child being asked to do?</i></p> <p>Look at the objective or main movement of the activity. This can be changed to suit a child's ability.</p> <p>Do not feel limited to the activity as it is written on the page. Bizzy Breaks is full of ideas that can be changed to suit children's specific needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limiting the number of different movements used (e.g Funky Fruit, p.12 – choose 2-3 of the movements to focus on, add more over time as pupils become more familiar with them). • Use just the upper body or just the lower body movements. • Stepping or marching instead of jumping.
<p>Equipment</p>	<p><i>What sort of equipment is used or could be used?</i></p> <p>Many of the activities require no equipment, but this does not mean that it cannot be incorporated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any activity that uses a ball could be replaced with balloons or beanbags (see note at bottom of page for more information on this). • Visual cues can be added to help with direction. • A variety of equipment of different colours, sizes and textures is great for providing sensory stimulation.
<p>People</p>	<p><i>Who else is involved?</i></p> <p>This can refer to the teacher, the SNA, SEN, parent or other pupils. It can also refer to how the instructions are given or the activity is explained.</p> <p>The activities are designed for use in the classroom but could also be used in smaller groups or 1-to-1.</p> <p>This can also refer to how the instructions are given.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing the activities with a partner or in a small group. • Giving simple instructions and introducing one part of the activity at a time. • Demonstrating the movement slowly.

Below are some ideas for how to adapt a number of activities to suit different needs using STEP.

We have not suggested different adaptations specifically for pupils with ASD or dyspraxia etc. as the adaptation will depend on the child (many of these adaptations are appropriate for children who may have problems with coordination, balance or information processing). Choose an adaptation that suits the needs of the children. This is not an exhaustive list but is designed to help you build confidence in adapting the activities.

Pencil Jumps (p.13)

Task:

- Change jumping, hopping etc to stepping.
- Change it to a seated movement on the floor – sit on a line on the floor with knees bent and hands behind to stabilize, move the feet to the left or right of the line when directed (keeping the feet together this would be a great activity for working on core strength).

Equipment:

- Make a line on the floor with tape or chalk instead of a pencil.
- Put paper on each side to label 'Left' or 'Right', or mark with two different colours and direct towards the specific colour instead of naming the direction.

Space:

- Mark a line much longer than the length of a pencil and move up and down along the line.

Step Sequence (p. 27)

Task:

- Instead of the full body movements suggested, use just the upper body or just the lower body.
- Do the movements slow and carefully instead of at speed.
- Limit to 3 or 4 moves.
- Do the moves individually instead of repeating each time.

Equipment

- Use visual cues to indicate the different moves.
- Add some extra equipment like resistance bands/TheraBands or beanbags as weights.

Catch 100 (p. 33)

Task:

- Instead of catching being the goal, set a target to aim for (a basket, a line on the floor or table) and adjust the distance to suit ability.

- Roll instead of throw.
- Change the objective from doing different catches to doing different movements before or after rolling or throwing.

Equipment:

- Use a beanbag.
- Use a large ball/inflatable ball that can be rolled or pushed.

People:

- Throw the ball or beanbag to the child or pair pupils to throw to each other.

Note on equipment

Balloons, beanbags and bubbles are all brilliant tools for getting children active. Balloons are particularly good for children with SEN as they move slowly, are light, are bright and colourful and great for working on visual tracking and anticipation.

See the [Bizzy@Home](#) page ('Creative Activities' section) for some great ideas for activities with balloons and beanbags. You can make your own beanbag at home and add dried lavender or essential oils to add an extra sensory element. These printouts are great for sending to parents over lockdown for ideas on how to keep children active at home.

Bizzy@Home also has some nice printables in *Animal Moves* and *Movement Dice* that are useful visual aids for movements. These could be used to replace movements in various Bizzy Breaks activities.