

Black & White Environment – Ideas for Use

My goal in creating these environments is to heighten visual contrast, to reduce the number of stimuli being presented to a pupil at any one time, and to provide a space for close observation and one-to-one work.

Challenge yourself to use just one or two items for the whole session (15 minutes?). Obviously, this is easier if your learner actively engages with a prop, but if they don't – don't rush to find something else. Instead, try to tune into their mood, their breathing, and your own intuition. Given them time to look around, to listen, and to simply be in this different space. Choose a prop from the tables that you think may interest your learner based on your knowledge of their sensory preferences. Present it in the way that you might for an Affective Communication Assessment – give lots of time, repeat the stimulus, and use your judgement about their response. In some cases, the environment may just offer you an opportunity to quietly 'be' with the learner without any demands on them

I have provided a variety of props along with ideas for their use (but the possibilities are endless and will be better if they come from you and you follow the pupil's responses!).

RECIPE

Ingredients – Just you, your learner and a sense of slow time

Method – 1 part action, 3 parts observation (unless your active involvement is being positively invited by your learning partner).
Be fully present and warmly available with a playful approach.
Be prepared to do nothing but watch & 'be with'

Instructions – SLOW pace. Give loads of time for just one thing