



**An Educator's Quick Reference Guide  
of Programming Ideas  
for Students with Developmental Needs**

## PREFACE

This booklet was created through the support of the “It’s About Time” program offered by the Ontario’s Teachers Federation. Three Durham District School Board teachers submitted a proposal that was accepted by OTF and thus the creation of this booklet became a reality. Thanks to the many teachers who contributed to the document. At the risk of forgetting to mention someone, we have chosen not to cite specific names (other than those of the authors). We do appreciate your help though and besides, you know who you are!

Durham District School Board has a “Developmental Handbook” (2005) which provides many ideas for how to run a Developmental Class. However, as teachers of students with profound disabilities, we saw a need for additional programming ideas. Our goal was not to replace the “Developmental Handbook” but to supplement the resource by providing additional suggestions in some areas such as trips, integration/buddy systems, sensory rooms, and quick and easy programming ideas with the focus on those students who are most limited in their abilities: non-ambulatory, non-verbal, limited control of movement. Ultimately, we would like this document to be fluid, with users continuing to add new and updated ideas and information as they become available. We are fortunate in that we live in a day and age where, through the use of technology, this would be a simple process. For now, we submit the original copy of “An Educator’s Quick Reference Guide of Programming Ideas for Students with Developmental Needs”. Our suggestions for Phase two of this project: let’s keep it going!

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# PROGRAMMING

## General

Programming for students with profound disabilities can become challenging. Many teachers of these students find the following activities work well with this group.

- **Morning Circle** -include songs and use of Big Mac, (Step-by-Step levels communicator works well at circle too) -see next section for additional activities
- **Daily sensory activities** -include working with all senses (including daily taste testing- pudding consistency works well and many children tube fed can handle small amounts of taste - check with parents first) -Some classes have sensory buckets for each student
- Do weekly - **spas** (foot baths, rub with cream, massage), **cooking, crafts, sensory room** visits
- **Place mats** -with the student's picture and include information needed when feeding the student. (Helpful when new EAs and lunch supervisors come into the room)

### Example of what a place mat might look like

- High contrast backgrounds - use high contrast backgrounds when working with vision. Shiny bright objects against black works well.
- **Sensory Room** - be creative with creating a "space" for a sensory room. Some classes have used cardboard dividers to create a room within their classroom. Check around the school for a small room that is not used regularly. One school was able to take a small workroom, another was able to secure funding to divide a room in the back of the library in two so that the library could keep it's literacy room on a smaller scale and a small sensory room could be built in the other half. See the sensory section for ideas to create an inexpensive sensory room.
- See also pages 27 - 34, **Sample "Welcome to Our Class"** overview for more general ideas

## Use of Adults and Schedules

Often a class has students with varying abilities making it difficult to do group activities. How do we ensure that each student receives the attention needed? As teachers of such classes, we have found that dividing the students up among the adults often works well. In one of our classrooms we have two students 'buddy' with an adult for the full week. The adult is responsible for following the two students' programs for the week, ensuring that IEP goals are worked on and assessed for the two specific students. On occasion, adults may be required to help with other students briefly (e.g., for lifts, feeding, etc), but their primary focus remains the students they are assigned to. Also, the teacher still has the flexibility to pull students into circle when appropriate, allowing educational assistants to do other activities as required. Time is allotted at the end of the day for the adult to record assessment data in the two students' tracking books. Each week the adult has two new students. This system works well because the teacher is able to focus on specific students each week and ensure the program being followed is appropriate. All teaching staff become equally familiar with all students.

In another one of our classrooms, it is necessary to use one-on-one adult coverage for two students and the third adult is able to work with the remaining four students. This system can also rotate weekly.

Be sure to have a schedule posted so that all adults know what the day involves and is clear on their responsibilities. Some of us find using a binder with plastic sleeves to hold the daily schedule works well. The schedule is the same each Day 1, Day 2 and so on. Dry erase marker can be used to make any changes to the norm and then wiped off for the following week. The picture shows making use of a white board and magnetic letters. The letters are glued together to spell the words of the schedule (e.g. library, gym) so that each individual word does not have to be spelled out daily. Pocket charts are also a good way to create a schedule as they can be easily changed.

### **Example of a class schedule using a whiteboard**

# Specific Activities

What follows on the next few pages are activities that can be used to fill in those portions of the day when students cannot have full adult attention. Ideas are not designed to be the entire program for our special students, but to be used to augment a program. This was not meant to be an exhaustive list, but rather a list to inspire you. Hopefully, these ideas will be a catalyst to the creation of further tasks. Please let us know your new ideas!

The following format is used to list the activities:

**Materials** -list materials required with a check mark for each item needed. Many of the items required for the activities were purchased at a dollar store or are items that can be found in recycling bins. When creating activities, be sure no small items can be removed and find their way to a student's mouth. The beads used are attached to their string and do not fall off if the string breaks. However, if you have a student who bites even these strings of beads may not be safe, as the student could get the string in his or her mouth and bite the beads off. C-clamps are used frequently. These are plastic clamps that can be purchased at dollar stores. Metal versions can be purchased at hardware stores, but the plastic dollar store models tend to work fine.

**Directions** -gives the directions to assemble the task.

**Independent** - method student uses to interact independently with activity. Even though these are independent activities, teaching staff must remain in close proximity and do frequent checks on the student and task. Something could break on the task which could possibly cause an injury, and thus the adult must be able to intervene immediately.

**Hands on** - gives suggestions for how an adult can aid the student in the use of the activity.

**Variations** -provides ideas for similar, but slightly different tasks or ways to use the task in a different manner.

**Life connection** - a further variation of activity -having practiced a skill through the activities described, students may be able to move on to variations that relate to purposeful chores/daily living tasks Not all activities include this section, as sometimes the primary life connection is described within the "Purpose" (e.g., working on grasp and/or tactile defensiveness, etc.)

**Purpose** - gives reasons for use of specific tasks. These goals may connect directly with IEP goals.

**Important notes** -often include safety notes. Sometimes may give some further useful suggestions.

# CIRCLE ACTIVITIES

The following ideas lend themselves nicely to morning or other circle times. However, they can be used at any time of the day.

## Surprise Bag

**Materials:** ✓ hoop about the size of a dinner plate on a handle (make with wire coat hanger, or purchase child's fishing/butterfly net from dollar store and remove net, or use a Jiffy Pop container and cut out bottom of 'pan' ✓ fabric sewn into bag (or use old pillow case) ✓ cord to gather bag ✓ glue (optional)

### Plastic sleeve to store clothing

**Directions:** If using old pillow case put cord through top hem of pillow case by cutting small hole. If creating own bag, create a 'casing' in which to put the cord. Draw cord to make the opening of the bag the same size as ring being used. Glue or sew gathered bag to ring. Fill bag with items. (Might be a theme such as objects found at holiday times, or a baking theme, or might be objects to represent songs.)

**Independent:** (Unless you are able to mount the bag within student's reach, even the independent use of the bag requires some help from an adult or another student who has skills to hold bag. Also once student selects object from bag, adult interaction is likely needed unless the purpose is to just let student continue to pick objects from bag with no adult feedback.) Hold bag within student's reach. Student pulls an item from bag. Depending on the lesson plan this can then lead to talking about what was selected, or singing, or further exploration of the item by the student.

**Hands on:** Adult helps student select object and activity continues as above.

**Variations:** This is a versatile tool that can be used for unlimited activities. Use it at music - students select instruments. Decide on next week's menu by choosing plastic foods. Put in items to represent large equipment in the room (something to represent a standing frame, water bed, physioball, hammock, etc) and have student draw what he or she is going to do next. ("Oh look! You pulled out the small piece of netting. That means you are going on the hammock!") Use your imagination. This can fit anywhere in your program!

**Life connection:** Remove: laundry from laundry bag, groceries from grocery bag.

**Purpose:** Decrease tactile sensitivity, increase grasping skills and finger movement, communication

**Important notes:** If coat hanger is used to make unit, keep an eye that wires do not begin to protrude.

## Cut-out Dolls

**Materials:** ✓ various colours of art foam ✓ velcro ✓ markers ✓ glue ✓ hooks ✓ plastic sheets with pockets that are used for collecting cards ✓ binder

**Directions:** Cut out a rectangular piece of foam approx. 7cm X 20cm. Cut a circle near the top of the foam so that the hook will go through it. Choose a colour of foam that is similar to the students skin colour. Cut out a 'paper -doll' shape that will fit on the rectangle piece of foam and glue the doll to the rectangle foam. Add hair using foam the colour of the student's hair and draw a face on. Draw or glue shoes on. Underwear can also be drawn or glued on. Repeat process until all students have a doll. Put students' names on dolls. Using a wide variety of colours, cut out pants and shirts to fit the dolls. Put a piece of velcro on the back of each piece of clothing and put corresponding pieces of velcro on each students' doll. Store clothing in plastic pocket sheets and store all sheets in binder. Put up hooks to hang dolls at a height

**Art foam doll to resemble student.** students can reach and in an area close to where circle activities take place.

**Independent:** This activity will likely need some adult support. Limit support to what is actually needed by student.

**Hands on:** When students arrive at school, talk about what colour of clothing each is wearing. This can be incorporated with a song "Lee wears a green shirt, green shirt. Lee wears a green shirt all day long". Show student several 'cut-outs' of shirt and let him or her pick the green shirt if capable of doing so (eye-gaze, pointing, reaching). Student puts the green shirt on his/her doll. Repeat for pants. (Doll may have to be removed from hook and placed on student's tray. Velcro could be used to secure the doll to tray.) Repeat for all students. Provide as much or as little support as necessary.

**Variations:** Calendar activities could be done in a similar way. Make a foam sun, cloud, etc. and student picks the symbol. Attach to a pre-made board that says "The weather today is....."Or use commercial calendars and modify by putting velcro on the back of the cardboard pieces.

**Purpose:** Increase grasping skills and finger movement, communication, eye-gazing

**Important notes:** Ensure student does not get foam in mouth. Get parent or student volunteers to help with cutting out the coloured garments.

## File Folder Choice Activities

**Materials:** ✓ file folders ✓ velcro ✓ clear mac tac or laminating ✓ photo of each student  
✓ photos of things students like ✓ coloured construction paper or foam art board (approx. size of recipe card) ✓ binder or other storage unit

**Directions:** Laminate or mac tac folders, photos, colours. Attach Velcro so that photos and colours adhere to file folders. Set up according to task. Store extra pieces in binder or other storage unit. In on example, students are asked to select their photo and what colour they are wearing. Use the song “Mary wears a red shirt, red shirt...” In another example, students are asked to select photo of a favourite activity. Sing a song to go with activity.

**Independent:** Student selects photos if able to do so.

**Hands on:** Help student with selection.

**Variations:** At free time, have a picture of two activities student likes and have student make choice. Use your imagination! Let us know about new uses of this versatile tool!

**Important notes:** Ensure student does not get foam in mouth.

# OTHER ACTIVITIES

## Sensory Bags

- Materials:** ✓ zip lock bags (or socks, rubber gloves, cloth bags)  
✓ variety of tactile items (macaroni, feathers, marbles, rice)  
✓ c-clamps

**Directions:** Fill zip lock bags with tactile items (one type of item per bag) and seal bag. Secure bag to student's tray with c-clamps.

Student with marble bag

Student enjoying Kinder  
Surprise Eggs bag

**Independent:** Be sure bag is within student's reach to allow exploration.

**Hands on:** Hold open bag around hand of student to stimulate grasp and finger movement

**Variations:** Instead of zip lock bags use socks, rubber gloves, cloth bags. Instead of one item per bag put a mixture in one bag. For directions to make a hair gel bag see:  
[http://www.childrensdisabilities.info/sensory\\_integration/activities-tactile.html](http://www.childrensdisabilities.info/sensory_integration/activities-tactile.html)

**Purpose:** Stimulate vision, decrease tactile sensitivity, increase grasping skills and finger movement, teach cause and effect

**Important notes:** If using plastic bags and having student work independently, be sure student's face cannot fall forward onto bag. Do regular checks on bags for holes so as to ensure small items are not breaking free and finding way to student's mouth.

## Sensory Boards

- Materials:** ✓ variety of tactile items (We use lots of items that would otherwise end up in the garbage or recycling) ✓ thick cardboard, plastic sign board, or thin sheets of wood, such as hardboard or peg board (We visited a tile store and asked for their discontinued tile boards and removed the tile. It comes with a handle cut out already! Break up the tiles later to make a mosaic in art!) ✓ glue gun and glue sticks ✓ c-clamps

Sensory Items

Tile board

Completed board

**Directions:** Glue items to board. Secure board to student's tray with c-clamps.

**Independent:** Ensure student can reach board to explore items.

**Hands on:** Work with student to stimulate grasp and finger movement.

**Purpose:** Stimulate vision, decrease tactile sensitivity, increase grasping skills and finger movement, teach cause and effect

**Important notes:** If you have students who have difficulty swallowing saliva, boards may have to be replaced regularly. (That's why we use items that would otherwise end up in the garbage or recycling.) Be sure no sharp edges protrude that could result in scratching the student. Do regular checks on the boards to ensure small items are not breaking free and finding way to student's mouth.

## Student interacting with sensory board

### Sensory Mobiles

**Materials:** ✓ variety of tactile shiny, noisy items (beads that are attached to string and won't separate, old CD's, tinsel, colourful plastic cups, bells, plastic containers)

✓ string ✓ tape, glue ✓ paper clip or hook

This mobile used plastic cups, beads, plant dome, and small pinata. Sharp edges of plant dome had to be cut and taped to ensure a smooth edge.

Pinata hangs inside plant dome. Cups are suspended by beads.

**Directions:** String/glue/tape items together in visually pleasing format that makes noise when moved. Hang from drop ceiling using a paper clip tucked around metal supports or use a hook. Ensure height is appropriate for students to reach.

**Independent:** Place student in position to reach mobile. (If student is in stander and mobile hangs too low, make knots in string and use a paper clip to hold unit up higher.) If wanting student to use a specific arm for reaching skills, place student in a position in which he or she can reach the mobile only with the targeted arm. (Eg. Want to increase use of left arm in a student who primarily uses right arm. Position student so that left arm only can reach mobile)

**Hands on:** ①Adult moves mobile slowly and watches for eye tracking. ②Rattle mobile and then hold quietly to determine if student will initiate a form of communication to request more.

**Variations:** Create mobiles that are hung on the wall at levels the student can reach. Mobile may have items that are not attached and the student's goal is to knock the items off.

**Student interacting with mobile**

(Left) A different mobile made with a large plastic candy jar, CD's and tinsel.

**Purpose:** Stimulate vision and auditory skills, target reaching ability, increase grasping skills, cause and effect, initiate communication

**Important notes:** If using items that might hang in loops such as beads and tinsel, cut so that no loops are formed to ensure nothing can wrap around the student's body parts and tighten when the child twists. Be sure no sharp edges protrude that could result in scratching the student. Do regular checks on mobiles to ensure that small items are not breaking free and finding way to student's mouth or that sharp edges have occurred due to plastic splitting and breaking. Watch tinsel does not fall off easily and find way to student's mouth.

## Knock Off Hoops

**Student interacting with knock off hoops**

**Materials:** ✓ Banana holder (hook type) ✓ rubber poached egg rings (or other bright coloured hoops) ✓ c-clamps

**Directions:** Put rings on hook of banana holder. Secure unit to student's tray with a c-clamp.

**Independent:** Make sure unit is within student's reach and in a position that student can knock or pull the rings off.

**Hands on:** Help student knock rings off.

**Variations:** Use your imagination to create other similar activities.

**Life connection:** Remove clothing items from hook to place in knapsack..

**Purpose:** Hand-eye coordination, gross motor arm movement, increase grasping skills and finger movement, teach cause and effect.

**Wall mobile made with shower caddy, scouring pads**

**Important notes:** Be sure hook is not sharp.

**Student interacting with wall hung mobile. She has successfully knocked off the scouring pads!**

## Knock Off Ball

**Materials:** ✓ Empty laundry detergent bottle (or pylon) ✓ plastic ball with holes ✓ string ✓ c-clamps

**Directions:** Use string to tie ball to handle of detergent bottle. Cut a flap at the bottom of the

bottle. Fold flap back and use flap to secure unit to student's tray with a c-clamp. (For students with a heavy hit you may have to remove flap and secure the unit by going through the hole directly to the base of the bottle.)

**Independent:** Ensure unit is within student's reach and in a position that student can knock the ball off.

**Hands on:** Help student knock ball off.

Variations: This idea was modified from "Knock it Off" from the following web page <http://www.palaestra.com/featurestory.html>. Check for more ideas on this page. Also, if you have other students less involved physically, they can be assigned the job of 'teeing up' the ball each time the student knocks it off.

**Life connection:** Knock laundry soap into the washer. After an art activity, knock scraps into garbage or recycling.

**Purpose:** Hand-eye coordination, gross motor arm movement, teach cause and effect.

**Important notes:** Watch for sharp edges of plastic.

## Clear the Deck

**Materials:** ✓ plastic Christmas balls with small hanging attachment removed and various light weight balls (or any other light weight medium sized objects) ✓ shallow basket ✓ string ✓ c-clamps

**Student working at 'clearing the deck'**

**Directions:** Fill basket with balls. Use string on sides of basket to make a loop in which to put the c-clamps to attach basket to student's tray. (Hard hitters may need a loop and c-clamp at front of basket too.)

**Independent:** Student works at removing balls from basket.

**Hands on:** Adult helps student remove the balls from the basket. Adult helps student "stir" the balls with his or her hands to encourage finger movement.

**Variations:** Some students may be able to transfer balls from one basket to another. Try other objects.

**Student working on knocking ball off**

**Life connection:** Any task that involves moving something from one container to a new container. (Perhaps a storage container has a broken lid and items need to be transferred to a new storage tub.)

**Purpose:** Hand-eye coordination, gross motor arm movement, fine motor finger movement, teach cause and effect.

**Important notes:** If you have another student less involved physically, he or she can be in charge of picking up the balls. Otherwise, an adult should be assigned this job to ensure noone trips on the flying balls!

## Motion Detectors

**Materials:** ✓ ornaments that make noise when motion detected (could also be a light that detects motion)

**Directions:** Set object close to student

**Independent:** Each time student moves, motion detector goes off

**Hands on:** Adult may need to help student move to set off sound/light

**Variations:** Use a variety of detectors at different trials. Use two detectors at one time so that when student moves one direction hears one sound and when student moves the other direction hears a different sound

**Purpose:** gross motor movement (possibly fine motor movement too), cause and effect

**Important notes:** This is a really quick and easy activity to encourage movement!

### Slinky and cat treat container

## Slinky Grab

**Materials:** ✓ small Slinky ✓ Small plastic container such as the ones that hold cat treats ✓ duct tape

### Student interacting with slinky

**Directions:** Cut a flap at the bottom of the container and remove or bend back flap. Remove lid from container. Slip a few of the strands at one end of the Slinky over the edge of the mouth of the container. Replace lid. Use duct tape to secure lid. Attach unit to student's tray by putting a c-clamp through the opening at the bottom of the container.

**Independent:** Student interacts with Slinky

**Hands on:** Adult may need to help student hand-over-hand

**Variations:** Various sensory objects could be secured to the students tray using this simple container/lid technique. Try not taping the lid on and allow student to pull item out of container.

**Purpose:** hand-eye-coordination, visual stimulation, auditory stimulation, decrease tactile sensitivity, cause and effect

**Important notes:** Ensure lid is tight so that objects do not fly off and injure student

## Bracelet Grasper

**Student wearing  
bracelet**

**Leather-like bracelet  
with beads attached**

**Materials:** ✓ 'Cool' bracelet ✓ String ✓ small sensory items such as beads

**Directions:** Using string, attach sensory items to bracelet. Put bracelet on student's wrist

**Independent:** Student interacts with attached sensory items that are always accessible

**Hands on:** Adult may need to help student hand-over-hand

**Variations:** Various sensory objects could be secured to the bracelet.

**Purpose:** hand-eye-coordination, fine motor, grasping, visual stimulation, decrease tactile sensitivity

**Important notes:** Ensure objects are secured tightly to bracelet. Use age appropriate bracelets and attachments.

## Can Crasher

**Materials:** ✓ coffee cans

**Student in walker  
working to knock over  
coffee can pyramid**

**Directions:** Set cans up in a pyramid-type construction on the floor.

**Independent:** Student walks through the cans to hear the crash.

**Hands on:** Some students will require an adult for supported walking.

**Variations:** This idea was modified from "Crash the Cans" from the following web page <http://www.palaestra.com/featurestory.html> which describes pushing students through the cans while they are in their wheelchairs.

**Purpose:** gross motor (e.g., to encourage walking), auditory stimulation, cause and effect

**Important notes:** Know your student! If they startle easily this may not be the best activity!

## Chicken Roaster

**Materials:** ✓ chicken roaster ✓ sensory items ✓ string

**Directions:** Set up chicken roaster with what is appropriate for student's present goals. Some items might be tied to the roaster, while others may be left so that they are easily removed. Use c-clamps to hold roaster to student's tray.

**Independent:** Student knocks ball off roaster, or pulls glove out of roaster.

**Hands on:** When going for walks attach roaster with pinwheel so that wind blows and makes pinwheel spin.

**Variations:** Be creative! The chicken roaster can be used to support a variety of items.

**Life Connection:** Removing glove from roaster is similar to removing towels from towel racks to put in laundry.

**Purpose:** fine and gross motor, visual stimulation, cause and effect, hand-eye coordination

**Important notes:** Make sure student's fingers do not get tangled around the roaster.

Pinwheel attached to roaster

Texture ball tied to roaster

Chicken roaster

Student working at removing glove from roaster

## TECHNOLOGY Switches

Switches can be used to run appliances through the use of a Power Link from Able Net. Also, toys that run off of switches can be purchased. But often toys can be adapted. One of our teachers, has created easy to follow instructions to adapt a dancing hamster to run off of a switch. Also available are *101 + Ideas for Using the Big Mac*. Contact Cortina Allen through lotus notes for copies of these two helpful resources. She can also put you directly in touch with the teacher involved in these projects. See also page 33 for helpful ideas.

## Making Photos with Sound on Computer

- With Boardmaker Plus installed on your computer, open icon
- Open a new board and make a single, two, or four grid as usually done with Boardmaker
- Import picture (look in) My Documents for photos. Click on grid and click on photo. It will move to grid.
- To add sound, double click on photo then click on recorded message and record a new sound -Record- 60 seconds to record voice -OK-type description of sound -OK
- Repeat for all photos
- Go to Dynamic Bds. and press use

## Slide Show with Recorded Sound

- Start WordPerfect Office 12 -Presentations (Microsoft Power Pt. Mode)
- Select "Presentations Slide Show" -select plain layout -OK
- Delete any text boxes not needed
- To insert new slides select: "Insert" -"New Slide" -select layout style "plain"and number to add
- Tabs at bottom- select slide number
- Open file with pictures and drag picture into slide show
- To rotate picture right- click select "rotate"
- Select next slide, drag in picture etc.
- Save -on desk top - rename and type name

To add sound

- Select slide
- "Insert" - "Sound" -"Record"
- Press red circle to start record and black box to stop
- To save sound to the "File"- "Save as" -name file and make note (on desktop) of location so sound can be found
- Go back to "Slide Properties" and open sound

To play side show

- Select "Sideshow" -"Play Slide Show"

To save

- "File" - "Save" -"Select Desktop" - "Slide show"
- Change file name to \_\_\_\_\_ .shw

## Switch Interactive Free Downloads

[priorywoods.veriovps.co.uk/resources/videos](http://priorywoods.veriovps.co.uk/resources/videos)

[www.judylynn.com/downloads](http://www.judylynn.com/downloads)

# SENSORY ROOM

Remember that it is not necessary to purchase expensive Snoezelen room equipment to make an effective sensory room! Below are just some examples of things that can be purchased at dollar stores and other retailers. Don't forget to keep an eye out at lawn sales and even in your recycling and garbage bins! Sometimes what you were going to throw out, can be a useful sensory room item. Also, see page 30 for more ideas.

## Items that can be purchased at dollar stores

glow sticks ☺ holograph paper (gift bags) ☺ flashlights ☺ stress balls ☺ paint brushes for stroking skin ☺ textured material for different feeling sensations ☺ light wands ☺ sandpaper for different textures ☺ sponges ☺ bike streamers ☺ water tubes and ooze tubes ☺ puppets ☺ koosh balls ☺ light up toys ☺ glow in the dark stickers ☺ plastic pot scrubbers ☺ tin foil plates etc. ☺ balloons (blow up, let go for noise and visual) ☺ cotton balls ☺ coloured cellophane ☺ feather boas

## Items that can be purchased at stores such as Canadian Tire/Walmart/Ikea

Disco light ☺ Black light ☺ lava lamp ☺ hand held massagers ☺ Scent diffusers ☺ Christmas lights ☺ Parachute ☺ Bean bag chairs ☺ Essential oils for scent bins ☺ Neon paints to make black light art ☺ Mirrors ☺ Scented markers ☺ Kites ☺ Net canopy for beds from (Ikea) ☺ foot massaging pillow ☺ wall shelves that can be mounted high on the walls for storage

# Things to Make For a Sensory Room

Sparkle water tube- use a clear plastic water bottle, fill to 3/4 full of water and add sparkles. Tape or glue lid on and shake. (Variation includes adding white corn syrup to container to make the glitter move more slowly)

Goop -3/4 cup cornstarch and 1/3 cup water 5-7 drops food colouring

Flubber -1 cup water, 1 cup glue, 7-10 drops of food colouring. Mix together. In a second bowl mix 1 1/3 cups warm water and 4 tsp borax . Slowly add to glue mixture and knead it till it has the consistency of play doh. Store in airtight container.

Projector -Use an overhead projector to show images on the ceiling. Put jello or coloured water in a large zip lock bag and move it slowly around to show different images

Colourful grain -Colour rice with food colouring and a small amount of rubbing alcohol. put in zip lock bag and mix, then allow to dry on a cookie sheet with paper towel.

Scent bins- Using film canisters or small plastic containers with lids, place small amounts of spices and dried food items that students can smell.

Play doh recipes -see <http://www.pedagonet.com/quickies/playdough.htm>

Rainsticks- Use heavier cardboard tubes and hammer small nails into tubing at various points. Fill with seeds, pebbles, rice or dried beans. Close ends with duct tape and cover with adhesive backed shelf paper.

Wheat bags- flannel material covering a bag filled with wheat.(can be put in microwave to heat up.)

## SCHOOL INTEGRATION IDEAS

It is important to think creatively in order to keep our students involved in the mainstream population of the school. Here are a few ideas to get you started.

- Join other classes in building on class trips
- Join other classes during activities or presentations that they are having within their class (drama or music presentations/assignments, chemistry experiments, cooking activities, shops, movies...the ideas are endless) Put it out to your staff that you are interested in helping out and you will be surprised at the things that you can be part of.
- Invite other classes for a presentation in your room (such as Scientists in School)
- Join other classes for gym or invite students to your gym class (make ways for our special students to participate or be the cheering squad -bring some Big Mac switches

- programmed to say things like “Way to Go!”, “Super Job!”)
- Adaptive education project for physical education class
- Daily adaptive education course (Secondary school -senior credit can be done through art, physical education, trades)
- Set up Reading Buddies with other classes (Could even work at Secondary level)
- Recess buddies program in Elementary schools (details below)
- Regular classroom integration (for as much or as little of each class that the student is able to handle) Join in for art, music, drama. At Secondary consider: horticulture, shop, hospitality, cosmetology classes
- At Secondary school, encourage students to complete community hours by volunteering in your class
- Invite other classes to come and cook for a special event, do a craft, listen to a story or music. Be creative!
- Invite other special education classes to your school for activities such as dances, lunch, to play Wii bowling, themed activities, walks within your community, special activities happening within your school
- Do disability awareness training also know as empathy training (details below)

## Recess Buddy System

An excellent way to integrate our students in the school population, is through the use of a recess buddy system. This involves having the students throughout the school come and get to know our students. Depending on the amount of adult supervision, this could include taking the students outside, wheeling the students around the halls at recess, or doing in-class activities. Below are some suggestions to help with running a successful buddy system at the elementary level.

- Post schedule outside class (reminds buddies who they are with on what day)
- Have buddies “sign in” to make it more “official”
- Buddies receive small candy after each shift
- Buddies receive bead after each shift. Special beads for 25<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup>, and 100<sup>th</sup> shifts. At school recognition assemblies students display beads and recognized for their acts of kindness.
- Most schools have ‘tickets’ for students caught doing good work used in draws later. Buddies get ‘ticket’ at end of each shift.
- Hold occasional meetings for buddies throughout year with “treats”.
- Have a variety of indoor activities
  - stories: books, on computer, on tape activated by switch
  - sensory bins (include visual, auditory, tactile, and scent activities -**no** taste activities)
  - balls
  - board games (Elefun, Kerplunk, Pop-up Pirate, Hungry Hippo, Leap Frogs-like Tiddly Winks but with small plastic frogs)
  - Items to play Hot Potato with (pass the object)

- Make a 'driver's license' test. (Multiple choice of students' 'rules for driving'). When successfully completed written portion, buddies work in pairs to determine if partner is ready for license. (After students pass test, small licenses can be printed off on manila paper and given to students. Leave a space for them to draw or paste their picture.)
- Make use of ***Fitness Friends*** program. Buddies to do fitness activities with students. Then buddy and student go to Iroquois Park for year end celebration. (Connie Trueman has done this for years. For more info contact her on lotus notes)
- Parachute games (The Scholastic Teacher catalogue sells a smaller parachute and CD with parachute games)

## Empathy Training (Disability Awareness Training)

Empathy Training or Disability Awareness Training involves teaching other students about disabilities. This is a valuable way to help other students feel more at ease with our special students. One of our teachers visits the other classrooms in her school and gives a general overview to students about disabilities. She then discusses specific disabilities. Once these discussions have occurred, she has simulation centres that students participate in where they can get a bit of a feel for what it is like to have certain disabilities. Such centres are not difficult to create. Speak with your vision resource teacher about goggles that simulate various vision disorders and about samples of Braille pages. Have students use earplugs and teach them sign language. Provide a wheelchair for students to try to manoeuvre about in.

The following web sites provide more information that may be useful when beginning Empathy Training.

<http://www.openroad.net.au/access/dakit/welcome.htm>

[https://www.dvusd.org/assets/pdfs/department\\_education/Disability\\_Awareness.pdf](https://www.dvusd.org/assets/pdfs/department_education/Disability_Awareness.pdf)

<http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/community/disabilities/guide.html>

## Community Integration Ideas (Trips)

Name	Contact Number	Location	Activities	Change Table and/or Lift
<b>Vandermeer Nursery and Garden Centre</b>	905-427-2525 <a href="http://www.vandermeernursery.com">www.vandermeernursery.com</a>	588 Lakeridge Road South, Ajax	-lots of space to manoeuvre wheelchairs -shopping, sensory, fish and turtles to look see	-no
<b>Windreach Farms</b>	905-655-5827 <a href="http://www.windreachfarm.org">www.windreachfarm.org</a>	312 Townline Rd., Ashburn	-farm and petting zoo, overnight trips, horseback riding, wheelchair accessible swings, accessible hay rides, accessible walking trails	-yes
<b>Whittamore's Farm</b>	905-294-8200 <a href="http://www.whittamoresfarm.com">www.whittamoresfarm.com</a>	8100 Steeles Ave. E., Markham	-wagon ride, corn and straw mazes, play structures, pick your own fruits **-students must be transferred out of wheelchairs for wagon ride	-no
<b>Pingles Farm</b>	905-725-6089 <a href="http://www.pinglesfarmmarket.com">www.pinglesfarmmarket.com</a>	1805 Taunton Rd., Oshawa	-tractor ride, orchard, pumpkin patch, school tours and lessons **-students in wheelchairs are unable to access all areas of the farm easily	-baby only
<b>Knox's Pumpkin Farm</b>	<b>905.263.2930</b> <a href="http://www.knoxpumpkinfarm.com">www.knoxpumpkinfarm.com</a>	6325 Enfield Road, Hampton	-farm animals, guided tours	
<b>Alpaca Farm</b>	<b>(905) 263-2098</b> <a href="http://www.spinningwheelalpacas.com">www.spinningwheelalpacas.com</a>	<b>1857 Regional Rd. #3 Enniskillen</b>	-check out the web sites page entitled "Alpacas Provide Therapeutic Relief"	
<b>Peterborough Festival of Trees</b>	<b>Ticket Hot Line:</b> (705) 745-7709 <a href="http://www.pfot.org">www.pfot.org</a>	Peterborough Memorial Centre 151 Lansdowne Street, Peterborough	-beautifully decorated trees -open <b>November 23 - 28, 2010</b>	
<b>Royal Winter Fair</b>	416-263-3404 <a href="http://www.royalfair.org">www.royalfair.org</a>	National Trade Centre, Exhibition Place, Toronto	-animals and farm exhibits **-book visit through Windreach Farms to access wheelchair accessible facilities	-no
<b>Ontario Place</b>	1-866-one-4-fun 416-314-993	955 Lake Shore Boulevard West, Toronto	-rides and attractions, performances, lots to see and do	

Name	Contact Number	Location	Activities	Change Table and/or Lift
<b>Centre Island</b>	<b>Ferry information:</b> 416-392-8193	Toronto Ferry Dock is located at the foot of Bay Street and Queens Quay.	-bike paths, picnic areas, Centreville Island park -Ferry ride	-no
<b>Petticoat Creek Conservation Area</b>	905-509-1534 <a href="http://www.cityofpickering.com">www.cityofpickering.com</a>	Pickering Harbour Front	-walking paths along the shores of Lake Ontario which offers an incredible view of the bluffs -supervised swimming pool, snack bar, picnic sites, and playground	-no
<b>Harbourfront Centre</b>	<a href="http://www.harbourfrontcentre.com">www.harbourfrontcentre.com</a>	Toronto Harbour Front	-concerts, walking paths	-no
<b>Bloorview Kids Rehab</b>	1-800-363-2440 <a href="http://www.bloorview.ca">www.bloorview.ca</a>	150 Kilgour Road Toronto	-Snoezelen Pool and Snoezelen room -variety of programs and services available	-yes including lift
<b>Variety Village</b>	(416) 699-7167 <a href="http://www.varietyonario.ca">www.varietyonario.ca</a>	3701 Danforth Avenue Scarborough	-facility designed for adaptive physical education -gym and pool programs -run the fitness friends program	-yes
<b>Sunrise Youth Group</b>	(905) 438-9910 <a href="http://www.sunriseyouthgroup.ca">www.sunriseyouthgroup.ca</a>	1621 McEwen Drive Whitby	-day and weekend programs	-yes
<b>Bowmanville Zoo</b>	905-623-5655 <a href="http://www.bowmanvillezoo.com">www.bowmanvillezoo.com</a>	340 King St. E, Bowmanville	-rare and endangered animals, rides, park, animal shows -indoor animal theatre with daily presentations	-no
<b>Jungle Cat World</b>	905-983-5016 <a href="http://www.junglecatworld.com">www.junglecatworld.com</a>	3667 Con.6 Orono	-wildlife park	-no
<b>Metro Toronto Zoo</b>	416-392-5929 <a href="http://www.torontozoo.com">www.torontozoo.com</a>	Meadowvale Rd., Scarborough	-various exhibits, check website for any visiting animals	-large table at First Aid station
<b>Nebs Fun world</b>	905-723-2631 <a href="http://www.nebsfunworld.com">www.nebsfunworld.com</a>	1300 Wilson Rd N. Oshawa	-bowling, arcade activities	-no

Name	Contact Number	Location	Activities	Change Table and/or Lift
<b>Rouge Hill Bowling Centre</b>	416-282-5841	111 Island Rd, Scarborough	-ball ramps available for bowling	-no
<b>Cedar Park</b>	905-263-8109 <a href="http://www.cedarparkresort.ca">www.cedarparkresort.ca</a>	6296 CEDAR PARK RD. BOWMANVILLE	-water park, mini golf, picnic areas, camp grounds	
<b>Grandview Children's Centre</b>	905-728-1673 <a href="http://www.grandviewcc.ca">www.grandviewcc.ca</a>	600 Townline Rd S. Oshawa	-swimming, walk on paved trail	-yes
<b>Legends Centre</b>	(905) 436-5455 <a href="http://www.oshawa.ca">www.oshawa.ca</a>	1661 Harmony Road North, Oshawa	-pool with wheelchair accessibility, library, arena with sledges, gym	-table with lift in family change room
<b>Safety Village</b>	905-668-5697 <a href="http://www.drps.ca">www.drps.ca</a>	1129 Athol St., Whitby	-safety lessons taught through the Durham Regional Police	-no
<b>Medieval Times</b>	1-866-543-5278 <a href="http://www.medievaltimes.com">www.medievaltimes.com</a>	10 Dufferin St., Exhibition Place, Toronto	-Medieval dinner and show	-no information found
<b>Casa Loma</b>	416-913-3247 <a href="http://www.casaloma.org">www.casaloma.org</a>	1 Austin Terrace Toronto	-majority of building is accessible via elevator	
<b>Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People</b>	416-862-2222 <a href="http://www.lktyp.ca">www.lktyp.ca</a>	165 Front Street East Toronto	-educational plays performed for children	
<b>Hockey Hall of Fame</b>	1888-879-0970 <a href="http://www.hhof.com">www.hhof.com</a>	Toronto	-practice shooting pucks, lots to see	-baby only
<b>Royal Ontario Museum</b>	416-586-5801 <a href="http://www.rom.on.ca">www.rom.on.ca</a>	100 Queen's Park, Toronto	-school tours and exhibits to look at	-small
<b>Robert McLaughlin Gallery</b>	905-576-3000 <a href="http://www.rmg.on.ca">www.rmg.on.ca</a>	72 Queen St., Oshawa	-unguided tour of art exhibits (cost is by donation)	-baby only

Name	Contact Number	Location	Activities	Change Table and/or Lift
<b>Pickering Pottery Studio</b>	Guida Pirita 905-420-2667	Pickering Recreation Complex 1867 Valley Farm Rd South	-pottery	
<b>Abilities Art Festival</b>	1-888-844-9991 <a href="http://www.abilitiesartsfestival.org">www.abilitiesartsfestival.org</a>	67 Portland Street Toronto	-2010 festival is September 29-October 3 - All festival venues are fully accessible with wheelchair seating for approximately 30 individuals	
<b>Ontario Science Centre</b>	416-696-3141 <a href="http://www.ontariosciencecentre.ca">www.ontariosciencecentre.ca</a>	770 Don Mills Rd., North York	-variety of activities and exhibits	-large table
<b>Canadian Automotive Museum</b>	905-576-1222	50 Centre St. S., Oshawa	-self guided tour, only about ½ hour of time -visual activity only	-no
<b>Textile Museum of Canada</b>	416-599-5321 <a href="http://www.textilemuseum.ca">www.textilemuseum.ca</a>	55 Centre Avenue Toronto	-hands on experience displaying visual art	
<b>Canadian Aboriginal Festival</b>	519-751-0040 <a href="http://www.canab.com">www.canab.com</a>	Check website for upcoming years location	-festival is held at end of November -good hands on experience	-depends on location
<b>Black Creek Pioneer Village</b>	416-736-1733 <a href="http://www.blackcreek.ca">www.blackcreek.ca</a>	1000 Murray Ross Parkway Toronto	-many buildings are not wheelchair accessible only access for wheelchairs are the streets and some main floors	-large table at first aid station
<b>Pickering Museum Village</b>	905-683-8401 <a href="http://www.cityofpickering.com">www.cityofpickering.com</a>	Greenwood, Ajax (3 kilometres east of Brock Road on Highway #7)	-many buildings are not fully wheelchair accessible	
<b>Bata Shoe Museum</b>	416-979-7799 <a href="http://www.batashoemuseum.ca">www.batashoemuseum.ca</a>	327 Bloor St W, Toronto	-guided and unguided tours are available -4 floors	-baby only
<b>Art Gallery of Ontario</b>	416-979-6608 <a href="http://www.ago.com">www.ago.com</a>	317 Dundas St W, Toronto	-a few exhibits allow hands on but not many	-baby only

Name	Contact Number	Location	Activities	Change Table and/or Lift
<b>Ontario Power Generation Station</b>	905-837-7272 <a href="http://www.opg.com">www.opg.com</a>	Sandy Beach, Pickering	-self directed tour through information station (free to public)	-no
<b>DDSB Challenge Track Meet</b>	Tracy Scott (organizer) Bobby Orr Elementary School	Oshawa Civic Centre	-flyer sent out every April -available for all levels of ability, time needs to be spent practicing with students and collecting times and distances before the meet, take tents and blankets for shelter	-no -large floor under stands
<b>Pickering Town Centre</b>	905-683-7171 <a href="http://www.pickeringtowncentre.com">www.pickeringtowncentre.com</a>	1355 Kingston Rd., Pickering	-shopping, visit Santa, food court	-large table in family washroom
<b>IKEA – North York</b>	416-222-4532 <a href="http://www.ikea.ca">www.ikea.ca</a>	15 Prowst Dr., North York	-\$1 breakfast until 11am -hands on sensory activities, restaurant has Playstation and t.v./movies	-no -nursing room
<b>Rainforest Café (Yorkdale Mall)</b>	416-780-4080 <a href="http://www.rainforestcafe.com">www.rainforestcafe.com</a>	3401 Dufferin Street Toronto	-restaurant in a rainforest atmosphere -shopping at Yorkdale mall	
<b>Loblaws</b>	<a href="http://www.loblaws.ca">www.loblaws.ca</a>	Check website for closest location	- cooking class, grocery shopping	
<b>Pacific Mall</b>	<a href="http://www.pacificmalltoronto.com">www.pacificmalltoronto.com</a>	4300 Steeles Avenue East, Markham	-taste and purchase a variety of Asian cuisine, shopping	
<b>T &amp; T Supermarket</b>	<a href="http://www.tnt-supermarket.com">www.tnt-supermarket.com</a>	7070 Warden Avenue, Markham	- Asian Grocery	
<b>Famous People Players</b>	<a href="http://www.fpp.org/location.php">www.fpp.org/location.php</a>	343 Evans Ave. Toronto	- black-light theatre - people with special needs involved	
<b>Rotary Park</b>	<a href="http://www.townofajax.com/Page676.aspx">www.townofajax.com/Page676.aspx</a> 905-683-3740 to rent Pavilion	177 Lake Driveway, Ajax	- great for hikes -After Thanksgiving and before Labour Day, can rent Pavilion	- no lift but Pavilion has table
<b>Liverpool Park</b>		Bottom of Liverpool Rd. in Pickering	- great place for hikes	no

Name	Contact Number	Location	Activities	Change Table and/or Lift
St. Lawrence Market	416-392-7120 <a href="http://www.stlawrencemarket.com">www.stlawrencemarket.com</a>	92 Front Street East Toronto	-over 120 specialty merchants and vendors	
Any mall or store			-shopping, lunch, some stores provide sensory stimulation (Michaels)	

# **SAMPLE**

## **“ WELCOME TO OUR CLASS PACKAGE”**

The following has been supplied by one of our Senior Developmental Class teachers. It holds a wealth of ideas for teaching our students. Well worth reading. It was designed to provide an overview for new helpers coming into the class.

### **Welcome to the Senior Developmental Class**

The Senior Developmental class at \_\_\_\_\_ has been designed to accommodate students who have a variety of special needs.

The students are between the ages of 14 and 21 years of age. Some live at home with their families while others live in group-home settings with continued family involvement.

The students in this class have physical, medical, and developmental challenges. Because of these challenges, the students require more one-on-one assistance and the use of adaptive devices and special equipment to communicate and complete tasks.

Though modified to accommodate students' abilities and interests, the program is based on mainstream curricula. Areas of study include: foods and nutrition, arts and crafts, music, phys-ed (physio and stretching), science, language (novels, short stories, and poetry), drama, communication, leadership and mentoring, and sensory activities.

Students enjoy integration and reverse integration, having special guests, and participating on community outings and trips in and around the Durham region.

The Senior Developmental class has an “open door” policy so staff and students may feel free to stop in and visit when they have some spare time. Just knock three times and say, “Hello!”

### **Senior Developmental Classroom Goals**

The goal of our classroom is to make sure that students participate as fully in their educational program, working on their specific goals during each activity. In some cases, Hand-over-hand assistance will be needed to allow them to achieve their goals.

Students should be working towards goals during all activities. Our staff members can inform you of each student's goals. Often overall goals are broken down to specific smaller goals, such

as fine motor skills, stretching/gross motor, communication (the use of purposeful body language, facial expressions, vocalizations, or adaptive devices), and purposeful gaze (following or focussing on objects or people).

Give students enough time to respond when working on goals. Sometimes a student may appear sleepy, continue to gently work with him/her and encourage a response.

Always involve students during all activities, even when watching videos or reading stories. Encourage students to attend and focus. Talk and interact with students as much as possible.

If you have any concerns about the student(s) you are working with, please do not hesitate in speaking with the teacher or other staff. Always feel free to ask questions or directions when working with students.

## **Communicating With Students**

Make eye contact and, if possible, get at students' physical level.

Speak clearly and slowly so that students have time to take in and process what is being said.

Allow students time to respond/react to your questions and comments.

When conversing with students, talk about things that may interest *them* and have some significance to *their* lives.

Remember that these are young adults; therefore, do not use baby talk *and* avoid topics that may be inappropriate within the school setting.

Speak *to* the student, not *about* the student.

Be respectful at all times.

## **Tactile Activities**

Tactile activities are an important part of a sensory diet and fine motor building programs. Hand and finger awareness, fine motor planning and attention can also be developed with the use of tactile activities. Independent use and/or hand-over-hand assistance is encouraged.

## Activities to try:

**Brushing** - varied brushes, drawing with a variety of products and erasing with various textures.

**Massage** - back, scalp, hands, feet, and limbs.

**Tactile Bins** - variety of grains, liquids, foods, etc.

**Treasure Hunt** - hide small objects in playdough or tactile material to find with fingers.

**Playdough** - edible, non-toxic, and home-made varieties.

**Foam soaps and shave creams** - draw, squeeze, or spread.

**Edible painting** - pudding, yoghurt, applesauce, etc. on a tray with or without paper to make patterns or prints.

**Feelie Items**- collection of small items of different textures and shapes to match and sort. This may include a variety of textiles and fabrics, or carpeting, mats, and packaging materials.

**Kitchen time** - mixing, tasting, smelling, washing up activities.

**Pets and animals** - petting and grooming for therapy and tactile experience.

**Sticky Play** - tape, mac'tac, home-made pastes to stretch, squeeze, and mash by hand.

**Sensory Room activities** - calming and/or exciting visual stimulation through light activities such as black lights, fibre optics, and light tubes may incorporate glow in the dark items/toys and the use of switches to make the experience more hands-on.

**Musical** - hand-held musical instruments and noise makers may be used for aural stimulation as well.

## Literature and Reading Stories

Use props whenever possible.

Modify tone of voice - exciting, sad, male voice, female voice, include sound effects, etc.

May use a flashlight to direct vision or illuminate pictures and props.

Explain each page in your own words, making it simple or complex depending on content and audience.

Describe what is happening in the illustrations, pointing out interesting elements.

Be dramatic, using your body and/or the students' bodies to perform actions.

Move picture to see if student can track image.

## Computer

Use hand-over-hand to activate and move switch.

Provide the student with two choices and allow him/her to pick.

Talk about what is being presented on screen.

Encourage the student to independently activate the switch on his/her own, wait a few seconds (approx. 30 sec.) and then assist with switch.

Use speakers and, if the room is too loud, headphones for audio portion of activity.

## Switch Activities

Choose appropriate switch for student's ability.

Provide student with two options - toys, lights, etc. Describe and show the objects to the student, allowing him/her to use independent or hand-over-hand investigation to make a choice.

Encourage independent switch activation by using timer function with preferred object or activity.

Focus on simple requests and responses: on/off, push, look up, look down, etc.

Encourage yes/no responses by turning things off and asking the student if he/she wants to play more..., view more..., listen to more..., etc.

Listen and watch student to see if he/she likes/dislikes what you are doing. More options may be required.

## Lunchtime

- 1. Student should make choices, if possible, regarding his/her food and drink preferences.**
- 2. Tell student what he/she will be eating and drinking, and tell him/her if you are switching foods during the meal.**
- 3. Staff *must* interact with students, especially the student who is being fed, to**

promote a friendly and social environment at meal time.

4. Student should help to the degree in which he/she is able, ie: touching cup or utensil, indicating *more* or *finished*, etc.
5. Every effort must be made by staff to ensure that students are comfortable, ie: positioning, wiping face regularly/when necessary, reheating food when necessary, using student-friendly utensils, etc.



# RESOURCES

## **Durham District School Board Documents**

- ACE/ACT Document
- Developmental Handbook 2005
- Teachers in Developmental Classes within the Durham Board

## **Web sites**

Numerous sites are embedded in the document. Please go to appropriate topic and visit any sites that are cited. However, this one is particularly good, and well worth the visit

<http://www.palaestra.com/featurestory.html>

## **Text Books**

- Instruction of Students with Severe Disabilities by Martha E. Snell
- Teaching Students with Severe Disabilities by David L, Westling and Lise Fox
- To borrow the above texts contact Cortina Allen on lotus notes

## **Protective garments for changing students- disposable gloves (without corn starch), aprons and arm sleeves; goggles.**

- Swish
- Auklan Granger