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# *Autism Spectrum Disorders in the Mainstream Classroom: How to Reach and Teach Students With ASDs*

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Excerpt from Chapter 10,  
*Info In, Info Out: Making Curriculum Happen*

## **Assess Your Assessments**

What are your tests actually testing? Sometimes what looks like poor comprehension...may actually be a problem expressing comprehension through traditional means. Consider that responding on a written test requires focus and organization; manipulating materials requires eye-hand coordination; participating verbally in class requires language processing and consistent engagement. If you have students who struggle to process and produce information, try some of these strategies to create contexts in which all students can demonstrate their concept competence.

### **\* One Skill at a Time**

Try to test one skill at a time as skills are developing. If you are testing for structure, be flexible about length; if you are testing vocabulary, be flexible about punctuation; if you are testing for facts, be flexible about handwriting.

### **\* Put It In the Bank**

Always accompany fill-in-the-blank questions with a small word bank. Word banks ensure that you are testing for word recognition and concept knowledge, rather than word retrieval.

### **\* Sounds of Silence**

When administering an assessment, implement some common-sense sensory adjustments to the classroom environment. Shut down classroom computers to eliminate their distracting humming and hypnotic screensavers; turn off buzzing overhead lights; keep the classroom door closed. Choose another time to sharpen pencils, staple projects onto the bulletin board, eat your crunchy salad, and so on.