

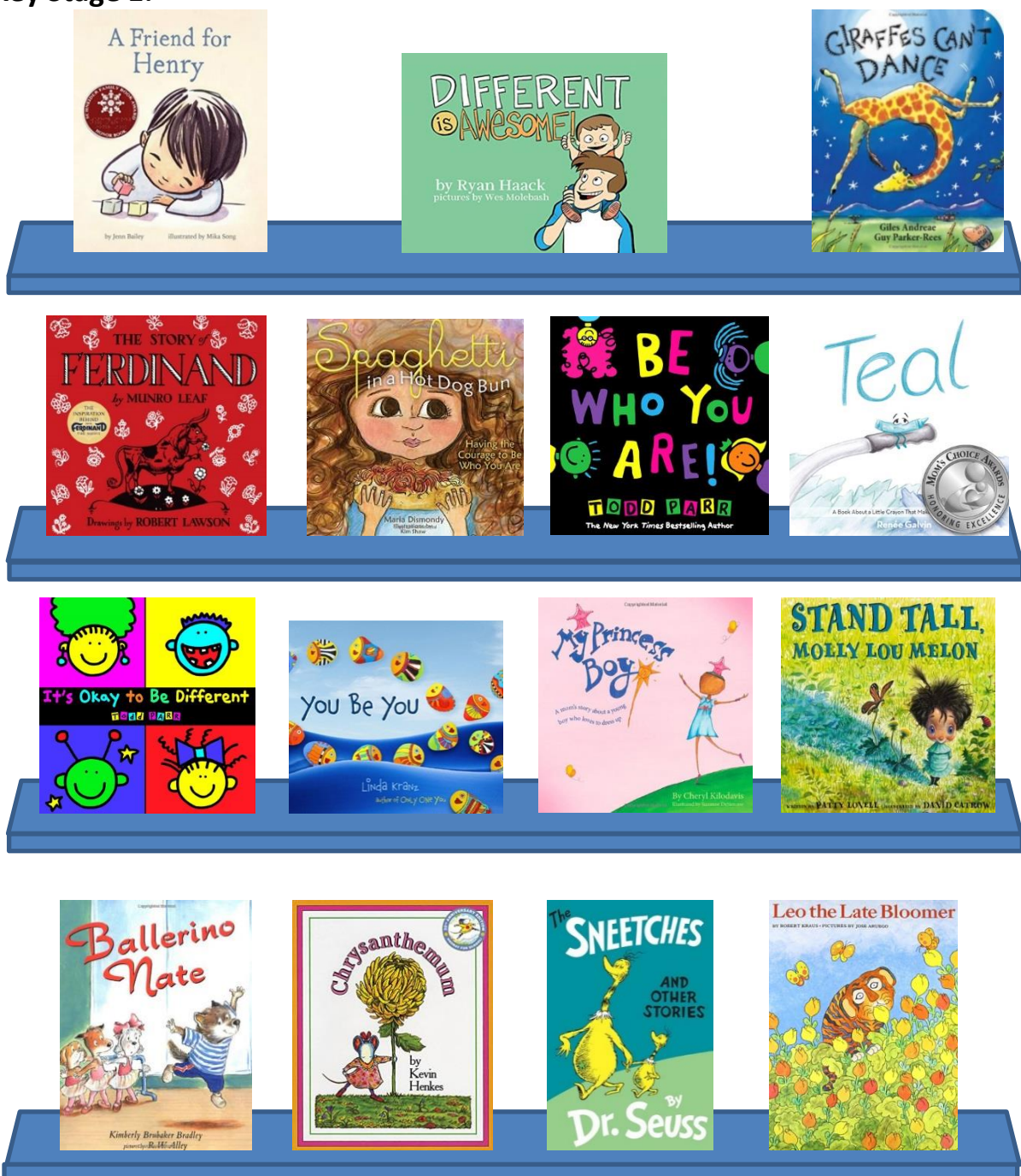
AUTISM

Acceptance Week

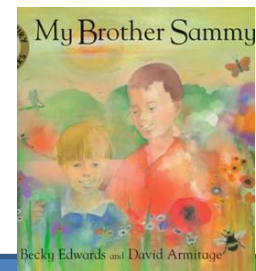
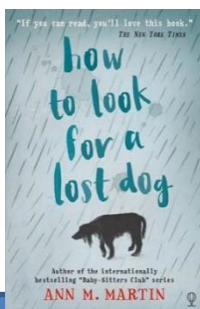
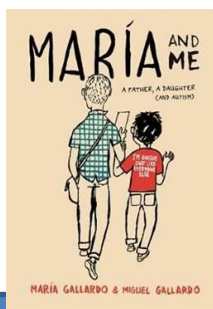
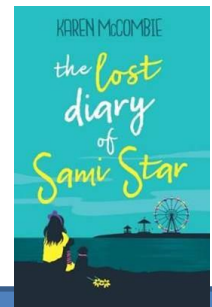
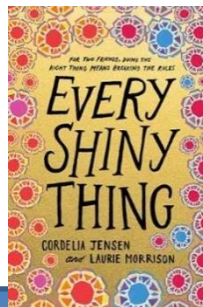
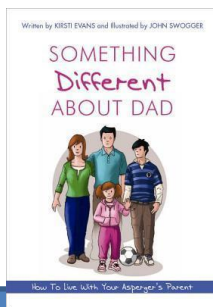
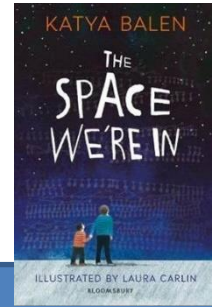
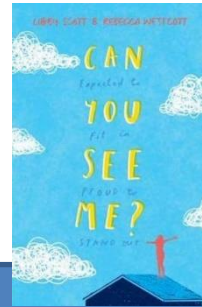
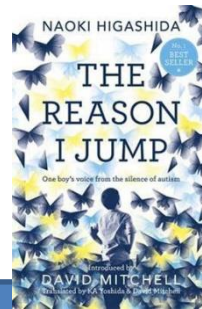
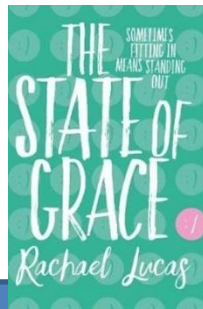
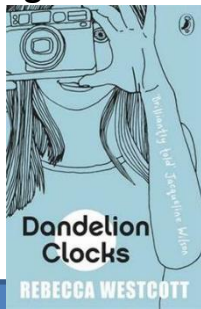
Teacher Information and Ideas

These books all celebrate differences. Although it is Autism Acceptance Week, it is important for children to realise that whatever their differences, it is ok and good to be you!

Key Stage 1:



Key Stage 2:



Depending on your school/class context you may want to begin by looking at differences and how these can be celebrated. Focus on the fact we all have different appearances, interests, personalities, skills and talents that should all be invested in and supported in school and the wider world.

Activities

We understand how school/the classroom can be busy and there is a lot to fit in. So we have tried to provide an overview of things you can dip into with your class. This is a starting point and there is so much out there that you could do!

Senses

Sometimes children and adults on the autistic spectrum will find that their senses can be over-sensitive or under-sensitive.

This means that they may have to work harder to manage their senses. For example:

- They may love spicy foods or only eat a few foods with not much flavour
- They may like a tight hug, or they may not like the feel of labels in their clothes
- They may find the classroom too noisy, or they may like banging objects loudly

Can you think of some things that you notice about yourself – what do you like, what don't you like?

- Are there foods you like, foods you don't like?
- What are your favourite types of sounds?
- What is your favourite outfit and why?

We all have preferences, and this doesn't mean we have Autism. However, for Autistic people it may mean that their likes/dislikes are stronger as their senses work in a slightly different way.

Activities to explore your senses:

- Make feely boxes
- Go on a listening walk
- Complete a taste challenge
- Design and make a sensory circuit

Special Interests

Just like the rest of us some children and adults on the autistic spectrum can have special interests. A special interest could be a hobby, collecting specific things or a topic. For example:

- Hobby – dancing/football
- Collection – Pokémon cards/rubbers
- Topic – insects/space

Do you have a special interest, what is your special interest? Tell a person in the class. Does anyone else have the same interest as you? How much time do you spend on your interest/hobby?

Sometimes, for autistic people, when they are involved in their special interest it can be a challenge when that time has to end or they have to listen to the class teacher as they will be thinking about their special interest. This means sometimes they need support to focus.

But not all the time! Have a think of a time when you haven't wanted something to end?
How has this made you feel?

Ideas linked to special interests:

- Show and tell session about a hobby or a collection
- Special interest session – generate a list with children and vote which interest you will try/explore for an afternoon
- Whole school special interest day – each staff member leads a 'hobby/interest', and the children can try different things
- Try something different – have a day or session where everyone tries something new – a different hair style, food at lunch, activity at break time or a new challenge in class
- There are lots of free dress days but if your school isn't overwhelmed by these then maybe have a dress to be different day, dress as your hobby/special interest/or a comfy dress day!

Additional links

In school there are rules we all need to follow. Ask the children to think of a time when they have helped a friend. What did they need help with and how did they help?

Supporting each other is good for our mental health and wellbeing. The National Autistic Society have a [video of 5 rules for helping to be an autism friendly school](#).

Although following these rules will help autistic children, they will also help us all! Ask the children how they could implement these rules. Can they think of other ideas to help?

A one-page profile is a simple summary of what is important to a child or young person and how they want to be supported. [Find one-page profile templates that you could use with your class.](#)

There is also [information on the Cbeebies website](#) with helpful video clips.

The most important message is that autism isn't a 'problem'. Autistic children and adults might have slightly different ways of doing things but that is ok as we are all different and need to help each other to feel happy, safe and enjoy our time in school!

In a world where you can be anything, be accepting.