



K-12 Neurodiversity-Affirming Classroom Routines — Weekly Lesson Plan

GRADE LEVEL

K-12

SUBJECT

Neurodiversity-Affirming...

WEEK OF

Unit Overview

Five 30-min builds that turn the whole class's daily routines into neurodiversity-affirming defaults — quiet supports for autistic, ADHD, dyslexic, and sensory-sensitive students, without singling anyone out. Built on UDL Guidelines and IDEA inclusion principles. Each session ends with one concrete classroom change you can keep.

Standards Alignment

CAST UDL Guidelines 2.2 (representation), 7.3 (engagement); IDEA inclusion principles

Global Standards Mapping

United States:

CAST UDL Guidelines 2.2 (representation), 7.3 (engagement);
IDEA inclusion principles

United Kingdom:

Key Stages 1–5 (cross-phase)

Australia / NZ:

Foundation–Year 12 (AC v9.0)

IB Programme:

PYP / MYP / DP — full continuum

Canada (Ontario):

Ontario K–12 (cross-grade)

Singapore / India:

MOE Primary–JC · CBSE Classes 1–12

EU/EEA note: EU/EEA: GDPR-compliant — no student PII collected; teacher use only

Companion Student Handout — ready to photocopy

Each lesson plan ships with a separate "Student Edition" PDF — daily I-can goals, vocabulary blanks, work space, and exit-ticket boxes. No teacher prep. Print and hand out.

Session 1

K-12 Neurodiversity-Affirming Classroom Routines — Weekly Lesson Plan

Learning Objective

Students (the teacher's class) will participate in a redesigned arrival routine that gives every student a predictable first 5 minutes.

Standards Alignment

CAST UDL 7.3 (engagement); IDEA inclusion principle

Materials Needed

- Visual arrival schedule (5 steps, posted)
- Optional sensory bin (fidgets, headphones)
- Quiet-bell instead of vocal cue

Lesson Flow

Opening / Hook (5-10 min):

Show two contrasting opening minutes: the chaotic one and the predictable one. Name the difference.

Direct Instruction (15-20 min):

Why predictability helps every neurotype: lowers cognitive load, reduces transition friction. Walk through the 5-step posted schedule.

Guided Practice (10-15 min):

Teach the routine: students try the 5 steps with a quiet-bell cue.

Independent Practice (10-15 min):

Run for the rest of the day; teacher observes who benefits and how.

Closing / Exit Ticket (5 min):

Reflection: 'The student who looked most relieved by this routine was ____.'

Differentiation

For struggling learners:

Provide a partially-completed organizer with the first row modeled and 2-3 sentence stems specific to classroom routines.

For advanced learners:

Add a transfer prompt: apply today's idea to a context outside classroom routines and defend the move in 3 sentences.

For ELL students:

Pre-teach 4 key terms with a visual glossary; offer the sentence frame "I notice that ____, which suggests ____ because ____."

For IEP students:

Reduce the response set by half; offer choice between a written, oral (recorded on Flip), or sketch response — same rubric.

Session 2

K-12 Neurodiversity-Affirming Classroom Routines — Weekly Lesson Plan

Learning Objective

Students will use a multi-modal directions format that supports auditory-, visual-, and reading-pattern processors.

Standards Alignment

CAST UDL 2.2 (representation); 5.3

Materials Needed

- Directions template: short verbal + 1-sentence written + 3-icon visual
- Sticky timer

Lesson Flow

Opening / Hook (5-10 min):

Give a complex direction with words only. Note who looks lost. Then re-give with all three modes.

Direct Instruction (15-20 min):

Triple-mode default: speak, write, picture. Walk through the template.

Guided Practice (10-15 min):

Teacher writes 4 directions in the new format; class executes each.

Independent Practice (10-15 min):

Continue the format for the rest of the day; teacher logs friction points.

Closing / Exit Ticket (5 min):

Class names which mode they personally rely on most.

Differentiation

For struggling learners:

Provide a partially-completed organizer with the first row modeled and 2-3 sentence stems specific to classroom routines.

For advanced learners:

Add a transfer prompt: apply today's idea to a context outside classroom routines and defend the move in 3 sentences.

For ELL students:

Pre-teach 4 key terms with a visual glossary; offer the sentence frame "I notice that ____, which suggests ____ because ____."

For IEP students:

Reduce the response set by half; offer choice between a written, oral (recorded on Flip), or sketch response — same rubric.

Session 3

K-12 Neurodiversity-Affirming Classroom Routines — Weekly Lesson Plan

Learning Objective

Students will use a low-stakes regulation menu (movement, water, quiet corner, fidget) without drawing attention to who uses it.

Standards Alignment

CAST UDL 9.2 (self-regulation); IDEA

Materials Needed

- Regulation-menu poster (4 options + a non-verbal hand-signal for each)
- Quiet corner with timer

Lesson Flow

Opening / Hook (5-10 min):

Show how a typical 'I need a break' moment plays out badly. Reset the norm.

Direct Instruction (15-20 min):

Four options + hand signals: water (1 finger), movement loop (2), quiet corner with timer (3), fidget (4). Anyone, anytime, no permission needed within rules.

Guided Practice (10-15 min):

Practice each signal; teacher narrates expectations.

Independent Practice (10-15 min):

Run for the rest of the day; teacher tracks who used what.

Closing / Exit Ticket (5 min):

Reflection: 'The biggest concern about handing students this autonomy was ____ and what actually happened was ____.'

Differentiation

For struggling learners:

Provide a partially-completed organizer with the first row modeled and 2-3 sentence stems specific to classroom routines.

For advanced learners:

Add a transfer prompt: apply today's idea to a context outside classroom routines and defend the move in 3 sentences.

For ELL students:

Pre-teach 4 key terms with a visual glossary; offer the sentence frame "I notice that ____, which suggests ____ because ____."

For IEP students:

Reduce the response set by half; offer choice between a written, oral (recorded on Flip), or sketch response — same rubric.

Session 4

K-12 Neurodiversity-Affirming Classroom Routines — Weekly Lesson Plan

Learning Objective

Students will engage with a discussion protocol that doesn't reward fastest-hand-up.

Standards Alignment

CAST UDL 7.1 (engagement); CCSS SL.standards (varied grade)

Materials Needed

- Discussion-protocol cards: think-write-pair-share with 90s think time + 60s write + 90s pair + share by random pull
- Index cards or whiteboards

Lesson Flow

Opening / Hook (5-10 min):

Pose a fast question; observe whose hand goes up first. Then pose the same kind of question with the new protocol.

Direct Instruction (15-20 min):

Why think-write-pair-share works for ADHD (gives external memory) and processing-speed differences (everyone gets time).

Guided Practice (10-15 min):

Run the protocol on a real content question.

Independent Practice (10-15 min):

Use it for the day's main discussion.

Closing / Exit Ticket (5 min):

Tally: how many different students contributed compared to a typical day?

Differentiation

For struggling learners:

Provide a partially-completed organizer with the first row modeled and 2-3 sentence stems specific to classroom routines.

For advanced learners:

Add a transfer prompt: apply today's idea to a context outside classroom routines and defend the move in 3 sentences.

For ELL students:

Pre-teach 4 key terms with a visual glossary; offer the sentence frame "I notice that ____, which suggests ____ because ____."

For IEP students:

Reduce the response set by half; offer choice between a written, oral (recorded on Flip), or sketch response — same rubric.

Session 5

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Learning Objective

Students will end the day with a 3-minute closing routine that supports working-memory consolidation for everyone.

Standards Alignment

CAST UDL 6.4 (executive function); CASEL Self-Management

Materials Needed

- Closing template (3 prompts: one thing I learned, one thing I'm bringing back tomorrow, one thing I want help with)
- Index cards

Lesson Flow

Opening / Hook (5-10 min):

"How many of you can name one specific thing you learned today?" Pause; observe.

Direct Instruction (15-20 min):

Closing routine builds working memory + retrieval cues for tomorrow. Three prompts + 3 minutes.

Guided Practice (10-15 min):

Run the routine.

Independent Practice (10-15 min):

Each student fills the card.

Closing / Exit Ticket (5 min):

Cards become tomorrow's opening cue. Teacher commits to keeping one routine from each session.

Differentiation

For struggling learners:

Provide a partially-completed organizer with the first row modeled and 2-3 sentence stems specific to classroom routines.

For advanced learners:

Add a transfer prompt: apply today's idea to a context outside classroom routines and defend the move in 3 sentences.

For ELL students:

Pre-teach 4 key terms with a visual glossary; offer the sentence frame "I notice that ____, which suggests ____ because ____."

For IEP students:

Reduce the response set by half; offer choice between a written, oral (recorded on Flip), or sketch response — same rubric.



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