SENSORY solutions™

Your Amazing Brain
DISCUSSION GUIDE



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tips for use

ASCA standards:
- M 2
- B-LS 1
- B-SS 2

Use this discussion guide to encourage further conversation about our sensational senses.

The questions, prompts, and ideas in this guide work for whole class, small groups, or one-on-one instruction.

This guide pairs well with **Teaching the Senses with *Your Amazing Brain* Mini Lesson Ideas**.

Return to these concepts regularly, helping students build their knowledge of their sensory systems .


Better Together with Your Amazing Brain

Today we talked about our amazing brains and our eight senses!

Today students learned about how their bodies take in sensory information and how it affects their thoughts, feelings, and actions. This is a BIG topic that we are just introducing as a foundation for future learning.

Key Themes
- We have more than 5 senses!
- Our senses have to work together for us to feel calm and ready to learn.
- When we feel "off," there are things we can do to turn our learning brains back "on!"

Keep Growing Those Brains

Encourage your child to notice how different sensory experiences, like movement, touch, or sound, impact their mood and focus. For example:
- "Do you feel calmer or more energized after our walk?"
- "How is it easier to focus on homework with the music on or off?"

Remind them to check in with their body and learn to recognize when they might need a break or some physical activity to refocus.

Look for opportunities to encourage empathy for others who might have overwhelmed senses.
- A kid who bounces their knee might need lots of proprioceptive input.
- An adult who snaps at kids may be overwhelmed by all the noise in the room (not excusing yelling but recognizing that we impact each other).
- We all have different sensory needs, so compassion is important!

For Further Reading with Your Child
- Your Amazing Brain by Jessica Sinarski
- Hello, Anger by Jessica Sinarski
- The Kids' Guide to Staying Awesome and in Control by Lauren Brukner

Quick Guides for Your Family

Check out this blog post to learn what may be behind meltdowns.

Learn more about our senses with this 5-minute video.

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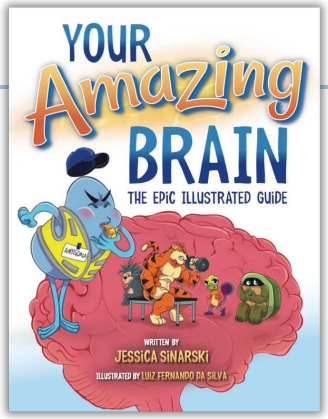
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Building Bridges

To bridge the gap between home and school, send **Better Together with *Your Amazing Brain*** home with each student.

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Discussion Guide

Brains are complicated!
There is a lot of information packed into this book, so take your time exploring.
Read different sections on different days.
Have a short conversation and come back to the topic another time.
See page 37 for more tips.

2-3 Introduction
4-9 Brain Cell & Nervous System Basics
10-13 Eight Senses & Where the Brain Gets Its Information
14-17 House & Hand Models of the Brain
18-21 Two Brain Teams Explained: "Act Without Thinking" & "Think Before Acting"
22-25 Becoming the Boss of Your Brain
26-29 Strategies for Helping Your Upstairs Brain Run the Show
30-31 Fun Facts & Tips about the Brain
32-35 More Brain Boosting Know-How
36-37 Guide for Grown-Ups
38-40 Activities and Glossary

Key Points to Highlight

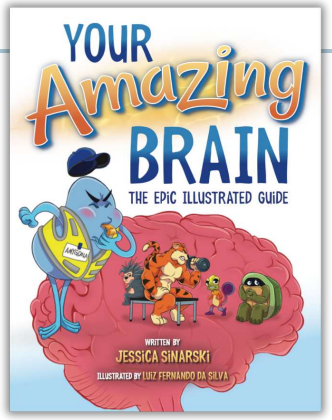
The brain is amazing and helps us understand and interact with our world using our *eight* (not just 5) senses.

- Think about the last few minutes. How many different sensory experiences can you name?
- Have you ever seen a younger sibling or cousin learning to walk or drink out of a cup? What senses were they using? Why was it so much harder for them than it is for most kids your age?
- Can you imagine trying to understand 11 million different bits of information all at once? Good thing our brains can make some things automatic!

Sensory processing plays a significant role in our daily life, and everyone's brains process sensory information a little differently.

- What do you think your brain does when you hear a loud sound or smell rotting food?
- How do you feel when you pet an animal vs touch a cactus?
- If someone you love is giving you a hug, do you like a tight squeeze or not too firm? Do you like to play music loudly or more quietly?

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Discussion Guide

(continued)

Sometimes our brains can feel overwhelmed by the mix of sensory information coming in.

- Have you ever felt like you needed a break because things around you were too much? What did you do?
- How can we help each other when someone is feeling overwhelmed?

Understanding our nervous system can help us feel more calm and focused at school.

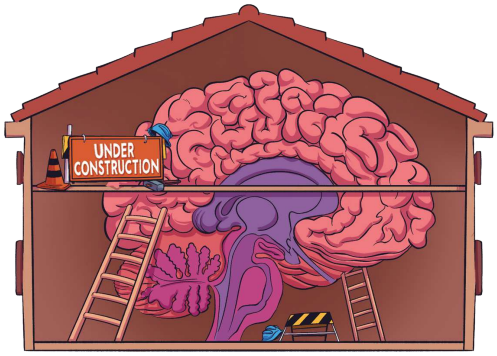
- Why do you think we need to move around during the day?
- What helps you get back on track if you are struggling during class?
- What are some clues that you are getting overwhelmed or that your senses are out of whack?

You can learn to be the boss of your brain.

- Think about some of the brain breaks or regulating activities and tools that are part of your classroom (e.g. stress balls, breathing activities, movement breaks, etc.) and then discuss what senses are activated with each.
- Which of these is most helpful to you? Which are most helpful for the whole class?
- Are there activities or tools that help you stay ready to learn throughout the day?
- What can you do in a moment of sensory overload (or "underload," as is often the case with proprioception)?
- What do you find *not* helpful during a Downstairs Brain moment?

Stay curious!
Curiosity is a powerful tool for brain building.

Keep learning.
Keep reflecting.
Keep growing your epic, amazing brain!



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