

Class Activity # 1

“Guess the Number”

This activity asks students to guess a chosen number (kept secret by the teacher) between 1 and 500. To do so, students must demonstrate executive functioning as they engage in the process of ‘deductive reasoning’ to determine the correct number in as few attempts as possible.


Due to the frontal lobe brain damage caused by prenatal alcohol exposure, the executive functioning of individuals with FASD can be significantly impacted. In this activity, those with FASD may be more likely to utilize ‘random guessing’ without a particular strategy for determining the secret number. Executive functioning can certainly be taught to people living with FASD; however, this often takes increased time, effort, and attention as their brains are not ‘hardwired’ in the same way as those living without FASD.

Directions:

- Instruct the students that you are thinking of a number between 1 and 500.
- Inform the students that they can only ask questions which result in “yes” or “no” responses.
- Inform the students that they are limited to ‘X’ number of guesses - this maximum number of guesses may be determined by the grade-level of your students (for example: 7, 10, 15, Or 20 guesses).
- Only share your ‘secret’ number with the students once they have used their maximum number of guesses.

Possible questions:

1. Is it higher than 250?
2. It is higher than 375?
3. Is it higher than 450?
4. Is it lower than 250?
5. It is lower than 125?
6. Is it lower than 50?
7. Does it have one (two or three) digit(s)?
8. Is it an even number?
9. Is it an odd number?



While this is a rather simple example of executive functioning, it gives us insight about one's ability to think deductively and use effective problem-solving skills. Other examples of executive functioning include: remembering instructions, juggling multiple tasks at once, focusing our attention on one task despite external disturbances (ie. sights, smells, sensations, or sounds), and self-regulating in stressful or overwhelming situations. For individuals with FASD, these processes are often incredibly challenging and require large amounts of energy and focus to undertake.

“It’s Party Time”