

# Class Activity # 3

## “Find the Hidden Meaning”

A ‘hidden curriculum’ exists in our society, wherein individuals are expected to act, behave, and speak in certain ways - all without necessarily being told how to do so. These ‘hidden’ social cues are often very difficult for people with FASD to learn, navigate, and implement in their daily lives. These ‘hidden’ rules need to be verbally communicated and directly instructed within the social setting that the behaviour is taking place in. Individuals with FASD live in a very ‘literal’ and concrete world and have difficulties understanding abstract concepts that people use in their conversations every day, like metaphors and figures of speech.

### **Directions:**

#### Part One.

- The below terms (page 3) are matched up with their metaphorical meanings. Cut out and scramble the terms and meanings.
- Give each student the full, scrambled list of terms and meanings.
- Instruct the students to match up the ‘term’ and ‘meaning’ that they believe to be the correct match.
- Inform the students that you will give them only 20 seconds for this activity.
- During this 20 seconds: - You will not provide any individual direction or support to students. - You will also make a point of causing sensory disruptions (ie. flicker the lights, on and off, a few times; close the door abruptly; stop your feet loudly etc.) - anything that you can do to be disruptive!
- When 20 seconds is up, call “time’s up!” and ask the class how confident they feel in their answers given the short time limit and sensory disruptions. - Students might respond that it was difficult to concentrate on the task given the disruptions and that they would have liked more time to complete the activity.



## Part Two.

- Now, inform the students that they have 2 minutes to complete the same activity - match the terms with the meanings.
- During this 2 minutes: - Do not cause any additional sensory disruptions. - You can also provide support and assistance to your students, at your discretion (however, do not blatantly provide them with the answers).
- When 2 minutes is up, ask the class how confident they feel in their answers now given the extended time period, quiet surroundings, and teacher support. - Students might respond that it was easier to concentrate on the task without having any classroom disruptions and that having more time to complete the activity (with teacher support, if necessary) was helpful.

To be successful, individuals living with FASD require learning environments that are quiet and supportive at all times. If there are even small disruptions (ie. fluorescent lights, screeching chairs, rolling pens, or whispering students), it can be extremely difficult - if not impossible - to focus on the instructions being given or the task at hand.

You are also asking someone with a very 'literal' brain to complete a task of abstract thinking, such as metaphorical communication (like in the activity provided), amidst all of this distraction. When we hold expectations such as this, we often set our young people - including those with FASD - up for failure.

**\*Cut out terms and meanings**

Terms

Meanings

“Bite the Bullet”

To force yourself to do something unpleasant or difficult, or to be brave in a difficult situation.

“Bull in a china shop”

Very careless in the way that they move or behave.

“Curiosity killed the cat”

Said to warn someone not to ask too many questions about something.

“Down in the dumps”

Unhappy.

“Don’t be smart with me”

When you speak to other people in a way that shows a lack of respect.

“You’re in hot water”

To be in or get into a difficult situation in which you are in danger of being criticized or punished.

“A heart of gold”

To be very kind and generous.

“Have eyes in the back of your head”

To know everything that is happening around you.

“Feeling blue”

Feeling sad.

“Money doesn’t grow on trees”

Said to warn someone to be careful of how much money they spend, because there is a limited amount.

“That’s the way the cookie crumbles”

Said when something unlucky or unfortunate happens that could not be prevented and must be accepted