SPARK: Simple Play Adaptations to Reference for Kids

Playskool Explore N' Grow Busy Gears

(Adapting the environment for Multi-Sensory Access – EC COE)

Description:	Image:
Toys activated by switches are often used with children who lack the motor strength, endurance, or control to play with a toy in the usual way. The switch provides a way for the child to push or push and hold a button to activate the toy to do a specific function. This toy includes 11 interchangeable gears that spin, play music, sounds, and also have twinkling lights. Children can place the gears on posts in a variety of configurations and test their construction skills by pressing the red button (switch) or turning the gears manually. Gears can also be stacked on top of each other. An automatic "shut-off" helps conserve battery life and a convenient carry handle makes it easy to take on the go. Measures approximately 2.6 x 14.5 x 10.5 inches.	 Purchase Information User's Manual

Who Might Benefit?

Those who…

- Children who need further practice of fine motor and eye hand coordination skills.
- Need a highly engaging multisensory activity to focus and attend to a task.
- Need an opportunity to learn about and experiment with simple cause and effect activities.

Why Use?

Provides an opportunity to…

- Refine fine motor and eye hand coordination skills.
- Engage in a simple construction STEM activity using gears.
- Participate in highly engaging multisensory (lights, sounds, visual patterns) activity.
- Understand simple cause and effect.

Instructions for Use:	Adaptation Ideas:
Environmental Considerations • Can be used in any environment that has a tabletop or floor surface, however due to the number of pieces and the lights	Optional Additional Materials/Supplies • Dycem • Velcro • Battery interrupter for AA batteries.

and sounds generated by the toy it may be best to use in either the home or school environment to help with managing all the items.

Positioning

- This toy can be most successfully used on a flat horizontal surface such as on a tabletop or on the floor with the child seated in a chair, on the floor or standing.

Alternate Positioning

- It may be possible to play with the toy on a slant board with a minimal elevation, however too much elevation may impact the spinning of the gears.
- It may also be possible for the child to be positioned on their tummy or in sidelying to play with the toy. Make sure the switch is within easy reach and make sure both the switch and toy are within the child's visual field.

Basic Play/Use

- An adult could place the gears on the pegs, and the child could then experiment with making the gears turn by pressing the button. The music will play, lights blink, and the gears will spin for a short period of time and then stop. Pushing the button again starts the activity again. This is a simple cause and effect activity.
- The child places the gears on the pegs in various configurations and presses the button to make the gears turn and activate the lights and music.

Extended Play/Use

- The adult could ask the child to place specific-colored gears on the pegs (e.g. put the red gear on the peg, next put the blue gear on the peg, etc.)

Stabilize It

- Make sure the child is successfully seated in a chair with both feet on the floor and encourage the child to rest their elbow or forearm on the table to help stabilize their body so they can successfully pick up and place the gear on the peg.
- The base of the toy could be placed on Dycem or Velcroed to a table or the carpet on the floor, so it doesn't move away from the child.
- Gear pieces could be lightly velcroed to the table or carpet for children who don’t have good, directed reach and tend to swipe at objects and knock them onto the floor before they can get a good grip on the object. You would need to make sure the Velcro does not interfere with the movement of the gear once it is placed on the peg.

Simplify It

- Provide a limited number of gears for the child to pick up and place on the base.
- Cover part of the base to limit the number of pegs the child can see at one time.

Contain It

- The base could be placed within a tray to contain it.
- The gears could be placed in a small basket to keep them together.
- Some children prefer to see pieces lined up so they can anticipate the number of items to complete the task. Gears could be put into long rectangular individual silverware baskets.

Add Sensory Cues

- The gears pegs have various patterns and colors that could be discussed.
- The gears could be adapted with puffy stickers, puffy paint, or various textured cloth.

Communication Support

- The adult could ask the child to name the color of the gear as they (child or adult) are placing it on the peg.
- The adult could ask the child to match like colors of the gears and stack them on top of one another (e.g. find the red gear and place it here, now find the other matching red gear and stack it on top of this red gear.).
- The adult could ask the child to place the gear besides, above, below another gear to develop spatial awareness skills.
- Gears could be counted as they are placed on the pegs or removed from the pegs.
- Take photos of the peg patterns and make cards out of the patterns. Have the child select a pattern card and then place a gear on the matching peg with the designated pattern.
- Take photos of the 3 toys in the Multisensory Switch Toy Kit 1 and print the photos. Create a foam board choice board and encourage the child to select which toy they would like to play with. When the child selects honor their choice by providing the selected toy for play. Begin by providing 2 choices adding additional choices as the child tolerates.

Play/Use with Others

- Children could take turns putting a gear on the board.
- One child could put the gears on, and another could activate the button to make the gears turn.

- Provide a communication board with vocabulary appropriate for the Busy Gears toy. (e.g. more, stop, help, on, off, start, blue, green, yellow, red etc.) for the child to request assistance and preferences in gears that may be added to the board if they are unable to add the gears independently.

DIY Alternatives

- The Busy Gears can be adapted with an additional external switch if the button is not large enough or the child does not have enough strength to press the built-in switch. Directions for making the adaption can be found on the following video and then most any external size or type of switch can be attached. The OCALI lending library has several kits with multiple types of switches that can be trialed.
- For an easier adaption for an external switch the Busy Gears can also be adapted with a switch battery interrupter and then the external switch of your choice can be attached to turn on and off the Busy Gears. The following video will show you how to install the battery interrupter. (NOTE: the battery interrupter must match the size of the battery used in the device).



- Create a Choice Board - The OCALI Autism Center Grab and Go Resource Gallery of Interventions has several choice board templates and examples that could be used to create the choice boards indicated above in the Extended Play/Use section. Additionally, there are several examples of

	different ways choice boards can be effectively displayed.

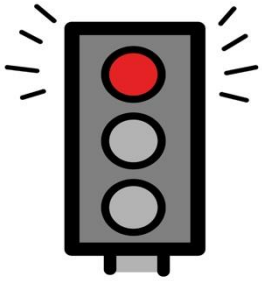
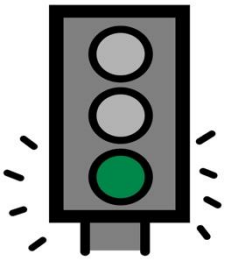
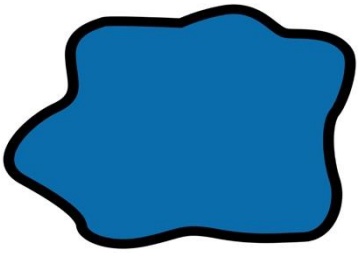
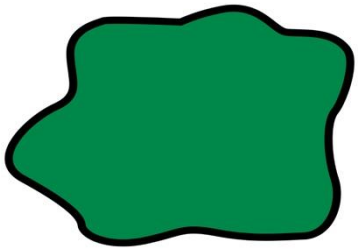
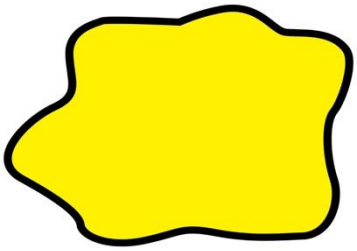
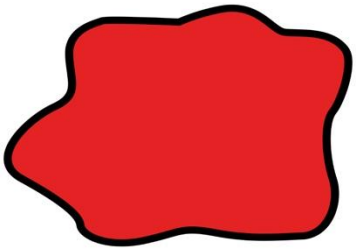
Additional Considerations:

- The toy is recommended for children 12 months and up.
- 3 AA batteries are required for the toy to operate with lights and music.
- Gears must be linked to the center gear to spin.
- The Busy Gears has lights and music. Some children with sensory sensitivities may not be able to tolerate the sound. Noise cancelling headphones could be used by the child to help reduce the noise if needed and can be obtained from the OCALI lending library as one of several items in the Sensory Regulation Kit.

Ohio Early Learning Standards

- SC: Science Inquiry and Application: Develops ability to reason about cause and effect. (1.b.).
- MA: Geometry: Develops understanding of spatial relationships (4.b.).
- AL: Engagement and Persistence: Persists in completing a task with increasing concentration (1.c.).

Words to Encourage Play/Use

Push 	Press 	Hold 
Stop 	Go 	Blue 
Green 	Yellow 	Red 
Button/Switch 	On 	Off 
Beside 	Above 	Below 

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