

**Speech and Language Therapy suggested strategies in class.**

Thomas experiences difficulty in the following areas which impact on his work;

- Literacy skills – Thomas finds it difficult to associate sounds with letters which impacts on his reading. He is beginning to use irregular verbs but this will need continued support. Thomas also struggles with verbal reasoning so will need continued support with expanding his vocabulary and forming sentences.
- Short Term auditory memory-Thomas finds it difficult to retain information which can impact on his ability to respond to questions in class.

Please continue to use the strategies provided by my colleague Sarah Smith.

Below are some additional ideas for helping Thomas in class:

Provide Thomas with praise when he achieves something and give him feedback to explain why he did well. This will boost his confidence and allow him to understand what exactly he did to achieve the goal.

Remove any potential distractions which may affect Tom's ability to participate fully in his lessons. This could include swivel chairs, unnecessary objects on the table. Also consider where Tom is sat in class; is he able to see and hear the teacher properly? Are the children around him distracting?

If Tom appears to be getting fidgety try some "brain gym" exercises to refocus him. Some examples are below:

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### LAZY EIGHTS:

Extend one arm straight out in front of you, with the thumb pointing toward the ceiling. In the air, smoothly and slowly trace the shape of a large figure 8 on its side.

As you draw the 8, focus your eyes on your thumb, keeping your head upright, facing forward and moving only slightly. Start tracing your 8 by beginning at eye level. Move your arm up and over to the left, around and back to centre, then to the right.

Do three full 8s with one hand, then three with the other and finally three with both hands clasped together.

\*\* This integrates both visual fields, improving balance and co-ordination. Many people report better vision after this exercise.

### THE THINKING CAP:

With one hand at the top of each ear, gently “unroll” the curved parts of the outer edges of both ears at the same time. Continue all the way to the bottom of the ears. Repeat three or more times.

\*\* This helps you tune out distracting noises, it increases listening ability, short-term memory and abstract thinking skills.

### CROSS-CRAWL:

Standing up, “march” in place, alternately touching each hand to the opposite knee.

Continue during the course of four to eight complete, relaxed breaths.

\*\* This exercise is wonderful for improving reading, listening, writing and memory. It co-ordinates the whole brain.

(Taken from [www.braingym.org.uk](http://www.braingym.org.uk))

These could be done between lessons or if appropriate, in class. A simple and discrete stretch and wiggle of the fingers and toes might also help!

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Introduce each new concept/activity to Tom so he fully understands what he has to do. For example: “Ok so today in maths we are working on graphs. Let’s have a look at this graph, it shows how many people like different minibeasts (point to what you are talking about)...what are minibeasts? Do you like them?” Asking him questions like these will help him to focus on the task and will help you to understand if he has fully grasped the purpose of the activity.

If possible use Thomas’ interests with topic work. This will help him to focus and he has a familiar reference point to work from. For example, his love of boats could be applied to history by comparing a speed boat to an old galleon or a piece of imaginative writing could be about a speed boat adventure!

Use word maps to help Thomas learn new words. Word maps can be used in every lesson and will help Thomas to grasp a good understanding of complex new words and concepts. You can add or remove categories depending on the activity.

Work through the Toe by Toe programme with Thomas on a regular basis. Every day would be the ideal or at least a few times a week. This will help Thomas to progress with his reading as he finds it difficult to associate sounds with letters.

Go through the verbs worksheets provided. Practice sentences in the present and past tense. Play them as a game eg cut them out and place some face down. Take turns to turn them over a say what is happening in the picture. Model answers for Thomas. If he is incorrect repeat the correct answer eg if he says “He runned” reply with “Yes he ran.” You could also ask Thomas what might happen next, which will help him with structuring and expanding his sentences.

Continue to practice memory games whenever possible. Use the examples provided on Sarah’s sheet.

A whiteboard taken to every lesson can be used for you to log any key instructions eg

I will need a pencil, my English book.

I need to:

1. Read for 10 minutes
2. Finish story
3. Start new work

Read through the instructions with Tom before he begins his work. This will allow Tom to be more independent and give him a structured sequence to focus on which he can refer back to during the lesson. Tasks can be rubbed out as he completes them so that he can monitor his progress.

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Signed:

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