

Help Sheet

0 – 25 Specialist Teaching And Support Service

How to support an orientation schema.

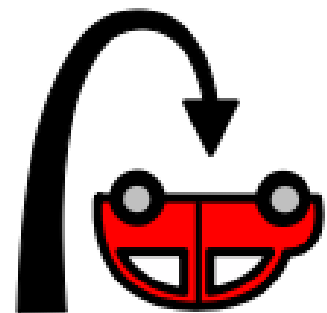


Why?

- The word schema was first introduced by Jean Piaget in 1952. In simple terms, schemas are 'patterns of play' that help children to develop their knowledge and understanding about how things work.
- Schemas are part of child development. For children with SEND schemas are likely to be in line with their developmental stage and may last for a longer period of time.
- Some schemas will fulfil a child's sensory needs as well as being exploratory learning.
- Children find schemas motivating so they can be a useful way to plan 'next steps' for a child with SEND.
- Orientation is a schema where children show an interest in viewing the world from different angles, perspectives, heights and positions. Children will enjoy moving themselves so they can see the world from different directions and orientations. They may be observed turning their toys upside down and looking at them from different angles too. When a child is exploring the orientation schema, they are learning a range of scientific and mathematical concepts and skills such as predicting, estimating, problem solving, measuring, testing ideas, making conclusions.

Learning gained from the orientation schema can be:

- Cause and effect
- Force and motion
- Sensory feedback
- Spatial awareness
- Positional language
- Gross and fine motor control



Related Vocabulary: Upside down, turn, twist, roll, backwards, over, under, through.

How?

Play behaviours associated with the orientation schema may be:

- Making and using ramps.
- Climbing to view the environment from a higher point.
- Swinging upside down to view the world from a different angle.
- Holding toys upside down to look closely at them.
- Examining the underneath of different objects.
- Looking at things upside down through their legs.
- Mirror play.
- Crawling round on the floor.
- Somersaulting, cartwheeling or doing handstands.
- Shadow play.



Things to note:

This resource sheet is part of the Schemas - Orientation Tool Kit.

- [Help Sheet – How to support an orientation schema.](#)
- Resource – Resource to support an orientation schema .

Reference / Evidence base – informed by:

Jean Piaget, Psychologist – Piaget's Theory 1952

Chris Athey, Lecturer in Education – The Froebel Early Education Project 1973-78

Tina Bruce, Honorary Professor in Early Childhood Education – The Froebel Block Play Project 1987

Understanding Schemas in Young Children Again! Again! – Sally Featherstone