

Spinner Activities For The Classroom (updated June, 2016)

Students can often participate in classroom or outdoor activities using a switch to run a spinner. In this way, the student is participating in the academic or physical activity in a parallel way. The overlay on the spinner can be varied with numbers, colours, letters, pictures or symbols, names shapes, spelling words, etc. The possibilities are limitless.

Numbers placed on the spinner might include ...

- Which “group” might go next in a game in the gym
- The minutes left until it is time to clean up, or finish a game/activity
- The friends who may do an activity with the student
- The number of spaces to move in a board game (use instead of dice)
- The numbers to fill in the blanks for math questions
- The number of times the students have to repeat an exercise in the gym

Colours placed on the spinner might include ...

- Which group goes next in a prediction activity (sequencing)
- What colour to use for an art project
- “I spy ...” game with the colour selected on the spinner

Letters placed on the spinner might include ...

- A letter for classmates to practice making on a chalkboard
- The beginning letter for a list of animals, foods or some other category
- A classmate whose names begins with that letter that can be a partner with the student for an activity
- Letters selected for a word or phonics bingo game
- Find something in the room that begins with the letter on the spinner



Pictures placed on the spinner might include ...

- A choice of centre time activity
- Which instrument classmates should use next
- An animal whose walk the classmates might imitate in the gym
- An object related to a learning theme that the classmates might write or talk about
- Pictures for a rhyming word game

Words placed on the spinner might include ...

- Haida symbols and classmates have to indicate the meaning of the symbol for socials
- Spelling words to practice
- Words for a rhyming word bingo game
- Antonyms or synonyms
- Names of classmates. When the spinner stops at a name, that student reads aloud for a short period of time

Questions written on the blank overlays might ask ...

- **Mad Libs:** put a variety of words on the overlay. One student starts the story using the word indicated by the spinner. The next student continues with the story using the next word that comes up on the spinner, etc.
- Students write a sentence or story that corresponds to the topic (e.g., categories such as forest animals or favourite places to visit; or sentences, such as "I was happy when ...")



Spinners are available commercially: <https://www.ablenetinc.com>

A spinner can also be made by removing the grill and blades on an electric fan and installing a cardboard disk with choices. Remove one of the fan blades and turn the other into a pointer. When the fan is plugged into a control unit such as a Powerlink, it can be activated with an attached switch.