

Seven ideas to keep handy

You know your classroom best. These ideas come from what helped me as a student, my time working with young people as a student pastor, and what teachers have shared with me over more than 30 years of working with educators. Some may simply be reminders of tools you already use. Think of this as a few ideas to keep handy on a busy day. Take what's useful and adapt it to your classroom.

1. Helping the instruction land

A missed direction doesn't always mean a student isn't listening. An agreed cue, one short instruction, or a written reminder may help. A quick "What's your first step?" can show whether the direction landed.

2. A manageable first step

When getting started is the sticking point, a sentence starter or one example together can give a student somewhere to begin. You might point to the next manageable step, then give them time to try it.

3. Feedback for the idea, too

When the task is about ideas, it can help to respond to the thinking and the spelling separately: name the strong idea, then identify a spelling skill to practice. The learning goal and the student's support plan can guide that balance.

4. Movement that fits your room

A brief stretch, a classroom job, or a quiet fidget may be worth trying with clear expectations. You and the student can notice whether it supports participation or adds distraction, then adjust together. The same tool won't suit every student.

5. Starting with a strength

A genuine strength can be a useful starting point for a parent conversation, followed by what you've noticed and a question. For example: "They had a thoughtful question today. Getting started on the written work was harder. What has helped at home?"

6. The value of a small moment

A clear next step, a quiet check-in, or another chance to begin can matter even when you don't see a breakthrough that day. You're one person in a student's wider circle of support. You don't have to carry every challenge alone.

7. A little warning before a change

A brief heads-up before switching activities may give a student time to shift gears. For example: "Two more minutes, then we'll put these away and begin reading."

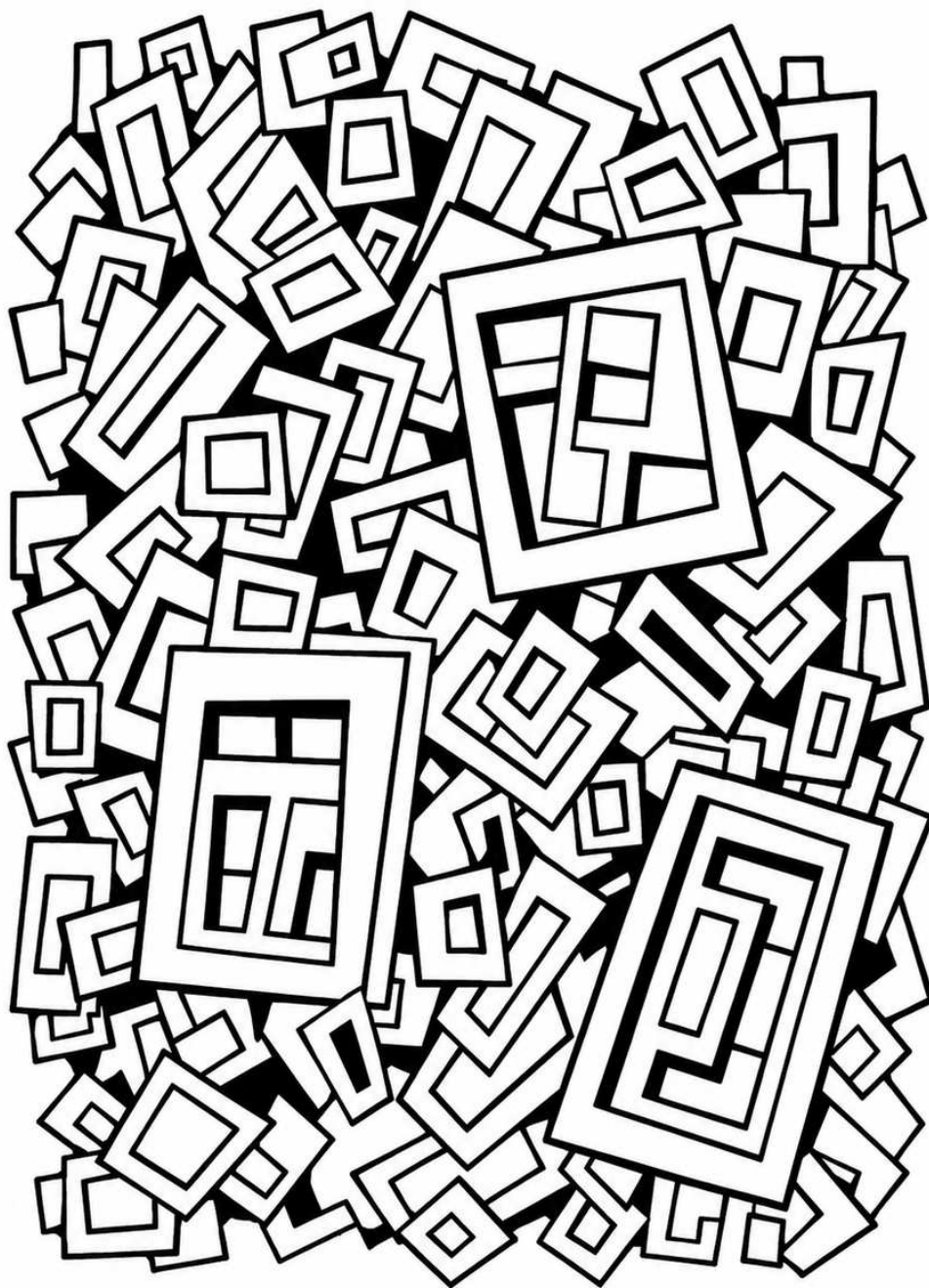
These are educational ideas to try and adapt, not diagnosis or treatment advice. Follow your school's policies and each student's existing support plan.

More guidance: CDC, ADHD in the Classroom

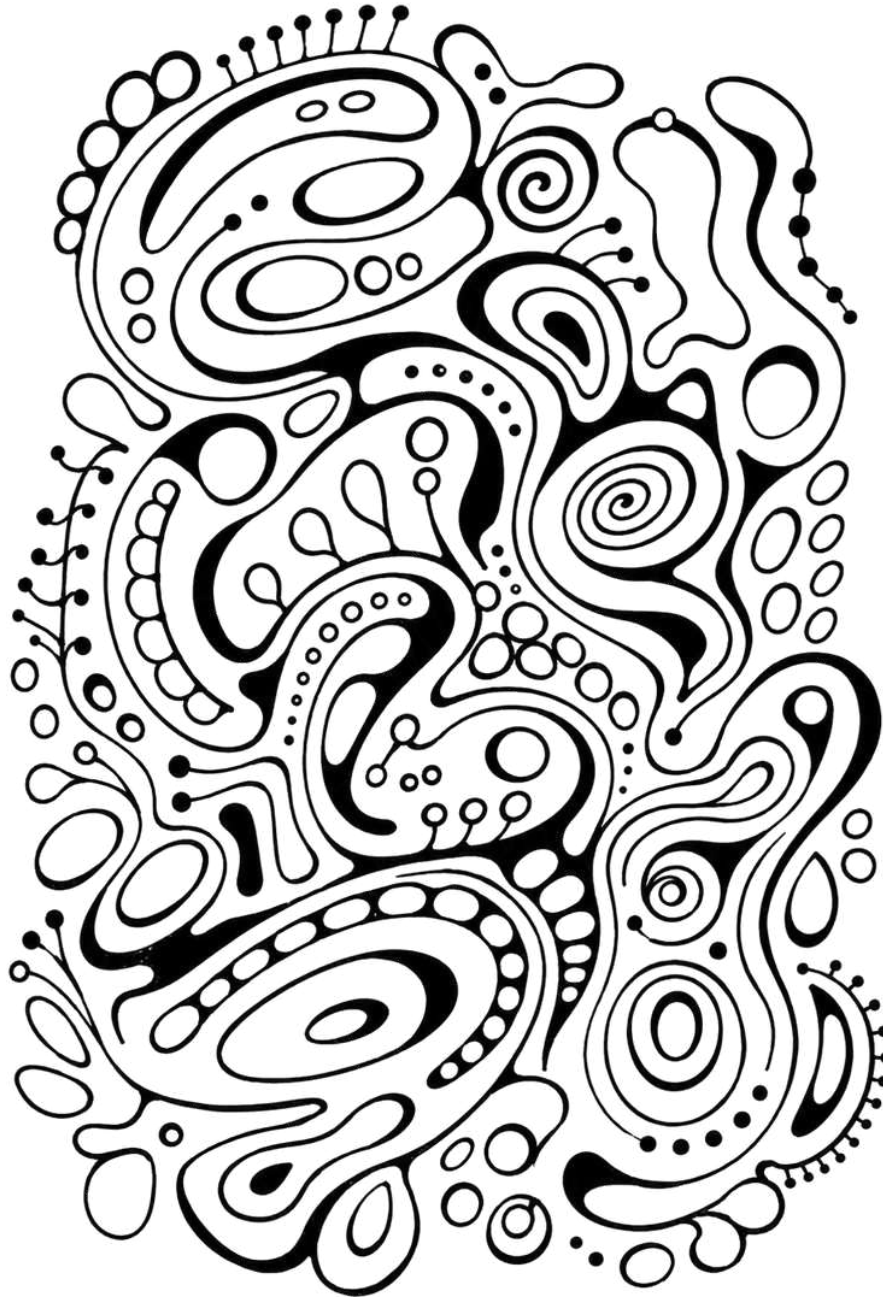
Planets and flowers



Geometric shapes



Loops and swirls



A MOMENT FOR YOU

A small win and a next step

If it's useful, take two minutes at the end of the day to remember an ordinary moment that went well, or a little better than before. Maybe a student began a conversation. Or a colleague helped you work through a problem. Choose one moment that stands out. A few words are enough.

Keep this reflection for yourself. Leave out student names and identifying details.

One small win I noticed today

Something that helped that moment happen

One manageable thing I want to try tomorrow

One person I can ask for support

Some days, the win is asking someone to help you work out what comes next.