

Comic Strip Conversations



What are Comic Strip Conversations?

Comic Strip Conversations are a technique developed by Carol Gray in 1994, to assist individuals develop greater social understanding. A conversation or event is visually presented in a picture using stick people drawings and colour. When displayed like this, abstract aspects of social communication for example, recognising the feelings and intentions of others, are made more concrete and therefore easier to understand.

These conversations can also provide a greater understanding into the perception of the individual with ASD.

Writing a Comic Strip Conversation

A comic strip can be written by the student or by the supporting person. It is not intended that they should be used for every situation, but rather, when it is beneficial for the individual to see another's point of view and therefore help them deal with a difference of opinion. This approach can also be used to prepare the individual for a similar event, providing them with useful information e.g. when it will begin and end, who will be involved and what will be expected from them.

The additional use of colour to show the feelings of others can be useful. This may help the individual to see the emotional meaning behind other's words and assist them in understanding the intent of the communication.

The situation is broken down into a sequence, a stick person is used to represent each of the people involved with their initial underneath. The first box should be labelled with the location of the event.

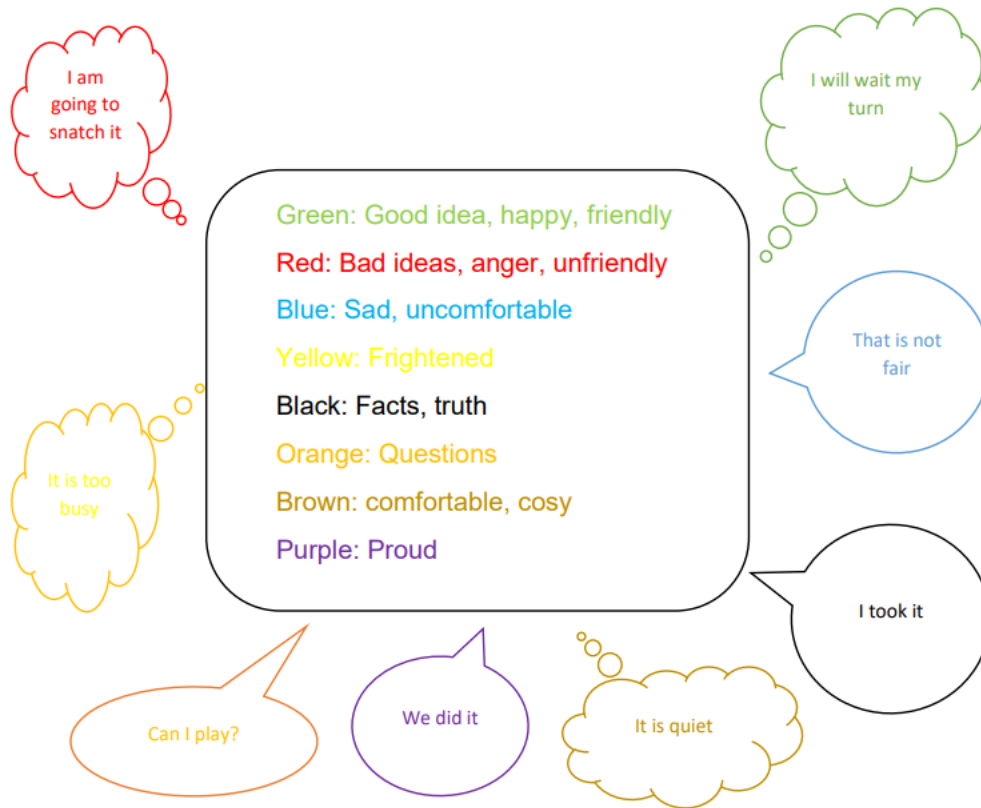
A speech bubble is used to convey what the person said, along with a think bubble to convey what the person was thinking. Each step of the situation is displayed like this, building up a picture of the event. It is imperative therefore, that the point of view of the other person involved is sought prior to starting the comic strip conversation.

At the end of the activity, it is useful to discuss the thoughts and feelings of those involved, helping the individual to understand the perspective of others involved in the situation. The outcomes of the session could be recorded as a checklist for future use. A new potential resolution can be discussed giving the individual a possible new perspective should the situation arise again.

Some children with ASD find it difficult to move on from an event. The concept of finished can be promoted here. After having discussed the situation and a resolution found, the conversation could be thrown away to signify that it has now been dealt with and no further discussion need be made.

Using colour to distinguish between emotions

The following colours can be useful to label each emotion.



Combination of colours: confused