

A NEW Emotional Regulation Lesson
From Enraged2Engaged!



E2E Sensory Grounding

A SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY
TO LEARN AND PRACTICE
SENSORY GROUNDING

© 2018 . Sara Simpson enraged2engaged.com

E2E Single Sensory Grounding

Overview

[5-4-3-2-1 Sensory Grounding](#) is a great tool for self-regulating during times of stress or dysregulation. However, many younger or intellectually disabled students find it difficult to remember all the steps. Others find that some senses (particularly sound) serve as more of a trigger than an aid in calming.

I developed single sensory grounding as an abbreviated version of the skill to use with these populations. I designed the coping strategy to be simple to remember and to engage breathing regulation and muscle stretching, as well as focusing on a single sense. My students found visual grounding and tactile grounding to be the easiest to do and the most regulating, so those are the scripts I created. However, you could easily create scripts for other senses (hearing, smell), as well.

This activity gets students out and about in the school in small groups, practicing an effective grounding strategy in actual locations most likely to trigger anxiety and dysregulation

Kansas SECD Standard(s) Addressed:

Personal Development

II. Self-Management : Understanding and practicing strategies for managing thoughts and behaviors, reflecting on perspectives, and setting and monitoring goals A. Understand and practice strategies for managing thoughts and behaviors.

Grades 6-8

1. Identify multiple techniques to manage stress and maintain confidence.
5. Recognize cause/effect relationships.
7. Practice effective communication (for example, listening, reflecting, responding).

Grades 9-12

1. Identify and evaluate techniques to successfully manage emotions, stress and maintain confidence.
5. Analyze cause/effect relationships.
7. Apply effective listening skills in a variety of setting and situations.
8. Recognize barriers to effective listening (for example, environmental distractions, message problems, sender problems, receiver problems).

Duration: Approximately 50 minutes (15 minutes overview/discussion/practice; 35 minutes in activity)

Cost: No cost

Preparation Time: 15 minutes (to make, print , and cut out BINGO cards specific to your building)

Supplies

- Prepared sensory BINGO cards, one per group; here is an [example of one I created](#) to use with my class for Tactile Sensory Grounding. You'll want to create BINGO cards specific to your own setting. myfreebingocards.com is an excellent and quick place to create a set of custom cards.
- Printed copies of the [E2E Visual Grounding Script](#) and/or [E2E Tactile Grounding Script](#), one script per group
- Pens/pencils for marking BINGO cards
- Clipboards, one per group (optional)

Discussion

- A. If you have practiced 5-4-3-2-1- Sensory Grounding before...
 1. Review 5-4-3-2-1 Sensory Grounding
 2. What are some of the things you liked about 5-4-3-2-1- Sensory Grounding? Why?
 3. What are some of the things you find challenging about it? Why?
- B. If you have NOT practiced 5-4-3-2-1- Sensory Grounding before...
 1. Give a brief overview of 5-4-3-2-1 Sensory Grounding
 2. What are some of the things that sound like they would be helpful about this coping strategy? Why?
 3. What are some of the things you think would be challenging about it? Why?

Directions

1. Practice Single Sensory Grounding (Visual, Tactile, or both) in the classroom, using the scripts provided ([E2E Visual Grounding](#) or [E2E Tactile Grounding](#)) or a script of your own creation. Repeat the exercise at least twice so students have received adequate guided practice from you.
*In my class, we did TWO days of BINGO: one day of visual grounding followed by one day of tactile grounding.
2. Place students into groups of 2-5. Make sure that each group has at least one adult/student leader.
3. Pass out a prepared BINGO card to each group. If you have made cards on myfreebingocards.com, each group's card will be different; this will help ensure that groups aren't all trying to achieve the same "bingo."
4. Pass out a prepared [E2E Visual Grounding Script](#) and/or [E2E Tactile Grounding Script](#) to each group.
5. Instruct the groups that they are to visit four locations on the BINGO card in order to form a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal "bingo" by practicing single sensory grounding in each location. Emphasize that the object of the activity is not to go as fast as they can in order to be the first group back; they are challenging THEMSELVES to practice skills in four different settings, not competing against other groups.
6. The groups will decide the locations they want to visit to practice single sensory grounding. At each location, the adult/student leader will use the script to guide students through practicing the grounding technique in that location.
7. After the group has achieved a "bingo," the group should return to the classroom to turn in their BINGO card and discuss the activity.

Post-Activity Discussion

Where was it easy to do the sensory grounding exercise? Where was it more difficult? What made some locations more difficult than others? Why? What are some other places inside the school, at home, or in the community when you could use single sensory grounding?

Variation and Extension Ideas

1. If you have a group that can be more independent, you can post adult staff in each of the locations to lead groups through the grounding exercises but allow the groups to move through the building on their own.
2. Have groups of students create a script for each of the senses (sight, sound, touch), then have students lead others through the exercise in a variety of locations.
3. Have students make recordings of their own, original grounding scripts and post them to YouTube.
4. Have students create their own BINGO cards for either the building or places in the community. Students can practice the skills learned in class at their community locations as homework, then return with their BINGO cards to discuss how things went.
5. Have more time? Have students play a longer BINGO variation: blackout, "x" pattern, etc.
6. Progressive relaxation (tensing up a muscle group, then relaxing it, progressively through the body) is a nice extension of tactile grounding that can be taught to students.