

From Text Maps to Memory Caps

**100 More
Ways to
Differentiate
Instruction
in K-12
Inclusive
Classrooms**

by

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and

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About the Authors

Paula Kluth, Ph.D., is a former special educator who has served as a general education co-teacher, inclusion facilitator, and instructional coach. Her professional interests include differentiating instruction, active learning, and inclusive schooling.

Dr. Kluth is the author or coauthor of eleven books including: *“You’re Going to Love This Kid!”: Teaching Students with Autism in Inclusive Classrooms, Second Edition*; *“A Land We Can Share”: Teaching Literacy to Students with Autism*; and *“Just Give Him the Whale”: 20 Ways to Use Fascinations, Areas of Expertise, and Strengths to Support Students with Autism*. Paula is also a director of a documentary film titled *“We Thought You’d Never Ask”: Voices of People with Autism*.

Sheila Danaher, M.S.Ed., is a consultant for the Christopher L. & M. Susan Gust Foundation, which is dedicated to supporting all students by creating inclusive school communities. She is a former learning specialist and administrator in the Chicago Public Schools, where she focused on supporting students with autism and differentiating instruction for all students. As a consultant, for the Gust Foundation, Sheila continues her work in the Chicago area by providing teachers with ideas for curricular adaptations, differentiating instruction, and implementing the best strategies for supporting students with disabilities in preschool, elementary, and secondary school settings.

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Social Skill Slam Book



Materials

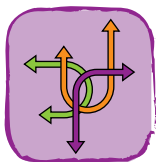
- Notebook or binder
- Photographs of students
- Speech bubble stickers



Description

Did you have a slam book as a kid? We remember using slam books to share favorite things, classroom crushes, and recommendations for friends. If you are not familiar with slam books, the concept is simple. The owner of the book creates a roster on the front cover or first page of the book with a series of numbers and one name next to each one. Then, on each subsequent page of the book, a question is posted along with a numbered list. Students answer each question by providing their response next to the number they are assigned at the beginning of the book. So, a student who signed in as the seventh name on the first page answers every subsequent question on line 7. Since names only show up on the first page, some slam book owners tear out that information so the content is private to anyone else viewing the book. This allows contributors to freely share information such as “What was your most embarrassing moment?” Questions for typical slam books range from *What is your favorite ice cream?* to *Who do you have a crush on?* to *Who is a person you admire?*

This idea is a slight variation of the slam books we grew up using. Our slam books are not necessarily as exciting as those found in the back of the classroom, but they feature that spirit of togetherness and secret-sharing just the same.



Directions

Teachers can create social skill slam books for their students who need advice and guidance from peers on topics such as making friends and dealing with stress. To help visual learners, this format includes pictures of classmates instead of just their words of advice.

First, decide on the social skills you want to target and develop simple questions based on these skills. Sample questions include the following:

- What are some topics you like to discuss with your friends?
- How do you know your conversation partner wants to change the topic?

- How do you start a conversation with someone new?
- How do you deal with anxiety?
- How do you deal with perfectionism?
- What do you do to calm down when you are really upset?
- How do you handle unfair situations?
- How do you cope with a low grade?
- How do you find the right extracurricular activity?

Then, ask your student with social challenges to choose a few peers he or she respects and would like to use as advisors.

On the first page of your book, introduce the advisors by writing a few sentences about each and adding the participant's photo. On each page thereafter, write one question on the left side of the book and three or four answers on the right side. Include a photo of each respondent next to his or her answer so the learner can visualize who is giving each piece of advice.

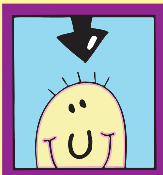
Give this book to the student to study proactively or bring it out during confusing or frustrating moments. Add new pages as challenges emerge.

Consider adding the student's own voice to the book in spots. In other words, let the book serve as a tool for positive self-talk.



Example

A high school student with Asperger syndrome often consulted with classmates about personal struggles, such as how to cope with anxiety and how to deal with the pressures of school, including choosing a college and taking standardized tests. His teachers helped him to create a slam book filled with ideas from the classmates who he viewed as successful and trustworthy. His questions included, *How are you choosing a college?*, *How do you deal with anxiety during tests?*, *What do you do when you feel frustrated with a teacher over a grade?*



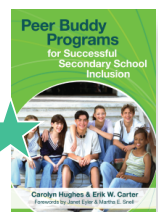
Keep in Mind

Some students may want to include respected friends or family members outside of their circle of classmates. Siblings, cousins, neighbors, older students, or even mentors can all be featured in slam books.



Reference

Hughes, C., & Carter, E. (2008). *Peer buddy programs for successful secondary school inclusion*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.





Vendor

Friendship Book

<http://www.friendshipbook.com>

This web site offers slam books for younger children with engaging pictures and fun getting-to-know-you questions.



Web Sites

eHow

http://www.ehow.com/how_2163255_slam-book.html

A short but useful tutorial on slam books.

Making Friends

http://www.makingfriends.com/slam_book.htm

Here you can find directions for making unique-looking slam books.