

iPads and The Curriculum

SUPPORTING THE CURRICULUM

As iPads are often used in the classroom, it can be helpful to have an understanding of some target areas in the curriculum. This knowledge is useful when developing Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and when planning how a student might use technology to access the curriculum.

Each of the App reviews included on Autismapps.org.au indicates which area of the General Capabilities curriculum the apps relate to. This will guide you as to why a specific App could be chosen and which areas of the curriculum are supported through learning with the App.

These learning areas relate to the General Capabilities section of the National Curriculum which outlines key learning areas for a student with Autism. This includes areas such as personal and social capabilities, critical and creative thinking, and literacy and numeracy.



UNDERSTANDING THE CURRICULUM

For a greater understanding of the General Capabilities curriculum areas see the information below:

Literacy

The Australian National Curriculum states that within the Literacy Capability students “develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions to interpret and use language confidently for learning and communicating in and out of school and for participating effectively in society”. This area of the curriculum encompasses both language and literacy skills.

As communication is a major area of need for children with Autism it is of significant benefit that the Literacy Capability allows learning to be targeted at the necessary level e.g. building early language skills before moving onto developing higher level communication skills.

The literacy capability also focuses on a learner being able to comprehend texts through listening, reading and reviewing texts, and composing texts through speaking, writing and creating.

Apps which focus on developing language and literacy skills may support in this area.

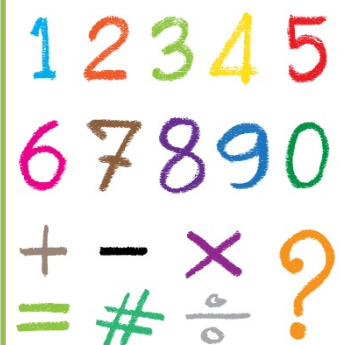


Numeracy

The numeracy continuum is organised into six elements and these skill areas can range across the levels of development and may be modified to suit any year of schooling. They include:

- Calculating and estimating.
- Recognising and using patterns and relationships.
- Using fractions, decimals, percentages, ratios and rates.
- Using spatial reasoning.
- Interpreting and drawing conclusions from statistical information.
- Using measurement.

Apps related to counting, shapes, maths sums, calculators or other numeracy skills can support in this curriculum area.



Information and Communication technology

The Australian National Curriculum has set out that within the Information and Communication Technology Capability students will learn to “use Information Communication Technology effectively and appropriately to access, create and communicate information and ideas, solve problems and work collaboratively in all learning areas at school and in their lives beyond school”.

Within the classroom, students may have access to a range of technology options including computers, Smartboards and iPads/tablet which can support their learning. Apps have been included in this area that may help a student directly engage with technology such as an app designed for use on a



Critical and Creative thinking

Critical and creative thinking is an important area of development for all students, especially for those with a diagnosis of Autism. The Australian National Curriculum states that students will learn to “generate and evaluate knowledge, clarify concepts and ideas, seek possibilities, consider alternatives and solve problems”.

Students are encouraged to work on skills such as reason and logic as well as finding ways to be resourceful, imaginative and innovative.

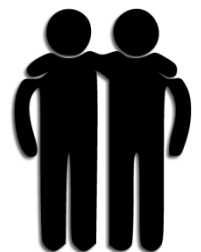
Many apps provide structure for students to learn more about problem solving and discussing everyday situations. Apps related to problem solving, discussion and detective work have been included under this category.



Ethical Behaviour

Within this capability students learn to “behave ethically as they identify and investigate the nature of ethical concepts, values, character traits and principles, and understand how reasoning can assist ethical judgment.”

Working on the skills in this area helps students develop an awareness of their own behaviours and how they can affect others. Apps can be used to track behaviour, teach new skills or help with understanding behaviour.



Personal and Social Capability

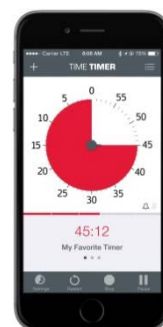
Many students with Autism will need support to develop social and personal skills with a range of people across different environments. Within the Personal and Social Capability students will learn to “understand themselves and others, and manage their relationships, lives, work and learning more effectively”. The capability involves students in a range of practices including:

- Recognising and regulating emotions.
- Developing empathy for others.
- Establishing positive relationships.
- Making responsible decisions.
- Working effectively in teams.
- Handling challenging situations constructively.

This capability is organised into four elements:

- Self-awareness.
- Self-management.
- Social awareness.
- Social management.

Apps that support this area might include social skills apps, emotions, visual schedules, timers or planning apps.



Intercultural understanding

Within the Intercultural Understanding Capability students will learn to “value their own cultures, languages and beliefs, and those of others”. The work within this capability could begin with each student learning about their Autism, their strengths and learning style. It could then extend to the student becoming their own advocate by teaching others about Autism.

Each student could continue to learn about their own culture to create a sense of belonging. The Australian National Curriculum outlines that students can achieve this through:

- Recognising, Interacting, Reflecting, Empathising, Respecting and Behaving responsibly

Apps that support learning in this area might include social stories apps or apps to explain Autism or behaviour.

