**5th Grade ELA Curriculum for Students with ASD**

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### ****Weeks 1-4: Expanding Narrative Writing****

**Focus**: Strengthening narrative writing skills through detailed character development, setting, and plot structures.

* **Week 1: Deepening Character Development**
  + **Activity**: Write character descriptions that include emotions, personality, and motivations.
  + **Hands-On**: Use soft clay or modeling dough to create a figure representing the character. This allows a tactile element without overwhelming sensory input.
  + **Break**: Quiet 5-minute mindfulness session (focusing on breathing or stretching) between activities.
* **Week 2: Creating Vivid Settings**
  + **Activity**: Write descriptive sentences to build vivid story settings using sensory details.
  + **Hands-On**: Make a “story setting collage” by cutting out pictures from magazines that match the written descriptions.
  + **Break**: Listen to calming nature sounds for 5 minutes to reset.
* **Week 3: Writing Dynamic Plots**
  + **Activity**: Write a plot summary, focusing on rising action, climax, and resolution.
  + **Hands-On**: Use felt boards to arrange pre-made story elements into a visual plot.
  + **Break**: Quick stretching exercise to keep energy up without sensory overload.
* **Week 4: Writing and Revising a Short Story**
  + **Activity**: Write a complete short story that includes all elements (characters, setting, plot).
  + **Hands-On**: Illustrate a scene from the story using light, non-overstimulating drawing tools (e.g., colored pencils).
  + **Break**: Short silent reading session to calm the mind.

### ****Weeks 5-8: Expository and Informational Writing****

**Focus**: Writing informative and explanatory paragraphs that communicate facts clearly.

* **Week 5: Choosing a Topic**
  + **Activity**: Choose an interesting topic to write an informative paragraph.
  + **Hands-On**: Use a “topic wheel” to explore topics by spinning the wheel to pick a subject (hands-on without overstimulation).
  + **Break**: Gentle music playing in the background for 5 minutes to reduce sensory overload.
* **Week 6: Organizing Information**
  + **Activity**: Use graphic organizers to plan an expository essay, focusing on topic sentences and supporting details.
  + **Hands-On**: Create an information chart with sticky notes to easily move ideas around and reorganize.
  + **Break**: Have a calm quiet time or look at a calming sensory object (like a sand timer or liquid motion bubbler).
* **Week 7: Writing an Informative Paragraph**
  + **Activity**: Write a paragraph explaining a process or giving information about the chosen topic.
  + **Hands-On**: Add a visual element by creating a simple chart or diagram to accompany the paragraph.
  + **Break**: A 5-minute break with fidget toys that offer soft, non-intrusive stimulation.
* **Week 8: Editing and Revising**
  + **Activity**: Review and revise the paragraph for clarity and structure.
  + **Hands-On**: Use a “revision chart” to help identify areas to improve (e.g., word choice, sentence structure).
  + **Break**: Quiet reading or looking through sensory-friendly picture books.

### ****Weeks 9-12: Persuasive Writing****

**Focus**: Developing a clear argument and supporting it with evidence.

* **Week 9: Understanding Persuasion**
  + **Activity**: Explore the basics of persuasive writing by identifying arguments in simple examples.
  + **Hands-On**: Use index cards to match claims with supporting evidence.
  + **Break**: 5-minute breathing exercise with sensory-friendly visuals (like videos of waves or soft colors).
* **Week 10: Writing Persuasive Paragraphs**
  + **Activity**: Write a persuasive paragraph that presents a clear argument and supporting reasons.
  + **Hands-On**: Use “persuasion cubes” to roll for different supporting reasons and write them down.
  + **Break**: Quiet reflection or time with a soft sensory object (e.g., a weighted blanket or plush toy).
* **Week 11: Strengthening the Argument**
  + **Activity**: Revise the persuasive paragraph to strengthen the argument.
  + **Hands-On**: Add supporting illustrations or diagrams to visually reinforce the argument.
  + **Break**: Listen to soothing instrumental music or nature sounds for 5 minutes.
* **Week 12: Revising and Editing**
  + **Activity**: Use peer feedback to revise the paragraph for clarity, structure, and argument strength.
  + **Hands-On**: Use color-coded markers to highlight changes and areas of improvement.
  + **Break**: A calming story or quiet time with a soft toy.

### ****Weeks 13-16: Research and Writing****

**Focus**: Gathering and organizing information for writing a simple research paper.

* **Week 13: Finding Sources**
  + **Activity**: Learn how to find reliable sources for a research topic.
  + **Hands-On**: Create a “research folder” with printed or drawn articles and notes.
  + **Break**: Time with tactile fidget tools like putty or stress balls.
* **Week 14: Organizing Information**
  + **Activity**: Use a graphic organizer to sort information into main ideas and supporting details.
  + **Hands-On**: Use a “research grid” to move sticky notes around and visually arrange information.
  + **Break**: Listen to soft, calming music while stretching.
* **Week 15: Writing a Research Paragraph**
  + **Activity**: Write a short paragraph summarizing research on the chosen topic.
  + **Hands-On**: Create a poster or simple diagram to visualize the research topic.
  + **Break**: A sensory-friendly calming activity (e.g., playing with sensory jars or watching calming visuals).
* **Week 16: Revising and Editing**
  + **Activity**: Revise the research paragraph for organization and accuracy.
  + **Hands-On**: Use a “revision spinner” to select revision tasks and work through them one by one.
  + **Break**: 5-minute break with tactile toys or calm coloring.

### ****Weeks 17-20: Creative Writing****

**Focus**: Encouraging creativity and imaginative writing while balancing structure and sensory sensitivities.

* **Week 17: Writing Poetry**
  + **Activity**: Write simple poems, focusing on rhyming or non-rhyming structures.
  + **Hands-On**: Create an “illustrated poem” where students draw pictures to accompany their words.
  + **Break**: Quiet reflection or listening to nature sounds (like rain or birds).
* **Week 18: Exploring Different Forms of Poetry**
  + **Activity**: Write haikus, acrostics, or other structured forms of poetry.
  + **Hands-On**: Use textured materials like soft paper or fabric to create a “tactile poem poster.”
  + **Break**: Sensory-friendly mindfulness activity (breathing or stretching).
* **Week 19: Writing Short Stories**
  + **Activity**: Write a short story with a focus on creativity but with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
  + **Hands-On**: Use “story dice” or “story cards” to help generate ideas and structure the narrative.
  + **Break**: Watch calming videos or use sensory bins with soothing textures (e.g., rice or fabric pieces).
* **Week 20: Revising and Sharing Creative Writing**
  + **Activity**: Revise the creative piece for coherence and flow.
  + **Hands-On**: Create a visual storyboard to go along with the short story.
  + **Break**: Spend quiet time with a sensory-friendly toy or activity (e.g., liquid motion toys).

### ****Weeks 21-26: Final Projects and Sharing****

**Focus**: Completing a major writing project and sharing it with peers or family.

* **Week 21: Choosing a Project**
  + **Activity**: Choose a final project (research paper, persuasive essay, creative story, etc.).
  + **Hands-On**: Use a project planning sheet to outline steps and set small, achievable goals.
  + **Break**: Quiet sensory activity such as drawing or light coloring.
* **Week 22: Drafting the Project**
  + **Activity**: Write a draft of the chosen final project.
  + **Hands-On**: Work on small sections each day to avoid overwhelming the student, using a visual progress chart.
  + **Break**: Sensory-friendly break with soft music or tactile toys.
* **Week 23: Revising the Project**
  + **Activity**: Use peer and teacher feedback to revise and improve the project.
  + **Hands-On**: Use stickers or stamps to mark completed revisions.
  + **Break**: 5-minute mindfulness session or time with sensory-friendly fidget tools.
* **Week 24: Finalizing the Project**
  + **Activity**: Write the final draft of the project.
  + **Hands-On**: Create a cover page and illustrations if desired.
  + **Break**: Soft, quiet activity like reading or time with calming visuals.
* **Week 25: Preparing for Presentation**
  + **Activity**: Practice reading or presenting the project aloud.
  + **Hands-On**: Set up a mock presentation space with minimal stimuli (e.g., dim lighting, quiet background) to avoid sensory overload during practice.
  + **Break**: A sensory-friendly activity like stretching or playing with calming fidget tools (e.g., soft tactile toys).
* **Week 26: Presenting the Project and Celebration**
  + **Activity**: Present the final project to peers or family in a sensory-sensitive environment.
  + **Hands-On**: Create a “presentation corner” with soft seating and reduced distractions. Encourage students to share at their own pace.
  + **Break**: After the presentation, celebrate with a “quiet party” featuring soft music, sensory-friendly snacks, and certificates of achievement.