

Supporting our ADHD stu... Squirrel! #### Ryan Collins -
Kenton City Schools

17 Wed, February 14, 2024

🕒 2:15pm - 3:15pm

📍 B144/145



Hi!

Director of Technology

Kenton City Schools

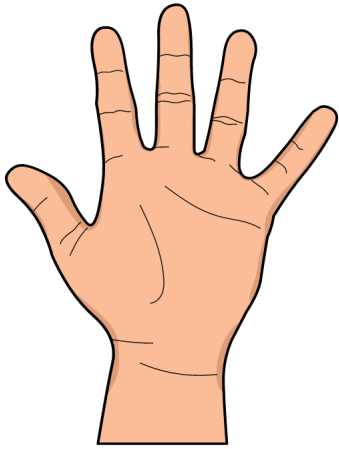
Blog is at eduk8.me

Note: Hi! I'm Ryan Collins, the Director of Technology for Kenton City Schools. That's K-E-N-t-o-n, not Canton or Kent. I also blog over at eduk8.me, a site you can share with your friends or threaten your enemies, the choice is up to you.

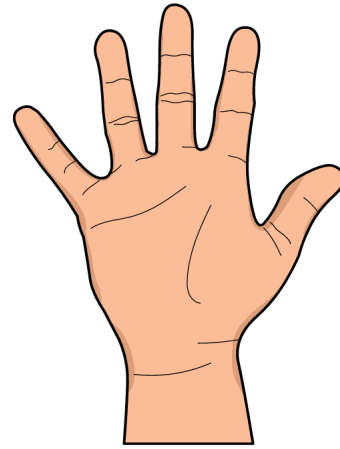
Today's agenda

Note: Let's talk about what ADHD is and more importantly, how you probably have ADHD students in your classroom that you don't know have ADHD.

What is ADHD?



You've heard it

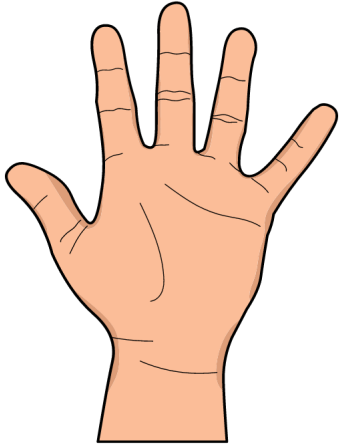


You've said it

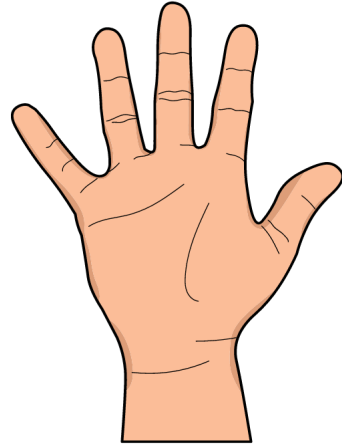
note: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xMwtGozn5jU>

Let's take a little quiz. I'm going to give you 5 phrases that are said in school. If you've said it, put down a finger on your right hand. If you've had it said to you, put down a finger on your left hand.

What is ADHD?



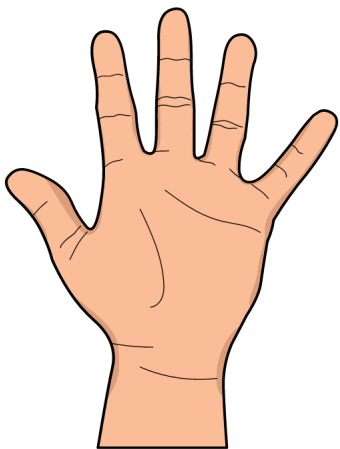
You've heard it



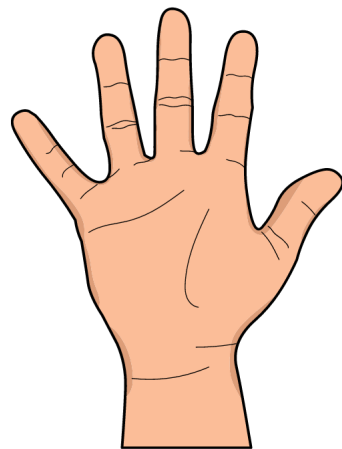
You've said it

1. If you only tried harder... What is your job right now?

What is ADHD?



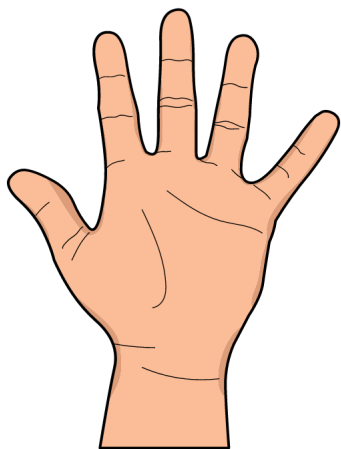
You've heard it



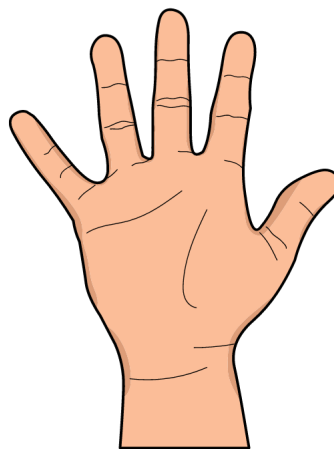
You've said it

2. If you stopped making careless mistakes.. Did you know you were supposed to do that?

What is ADHD?



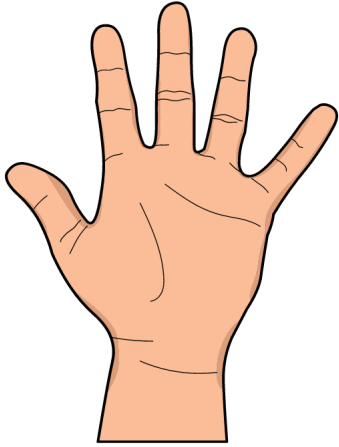
You've heard it



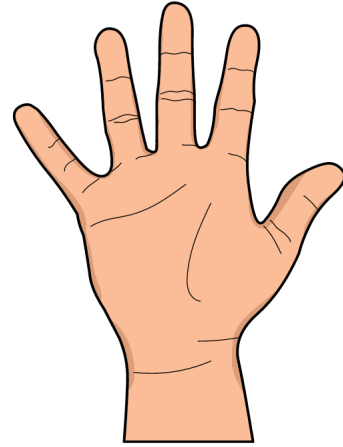
You've said it

3. How many times do I have to tell you... Did I give that direction already?

What is ADHD?



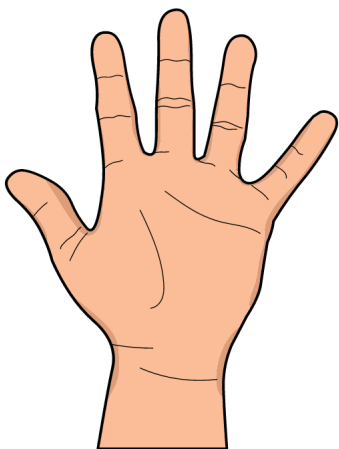
You've heard it



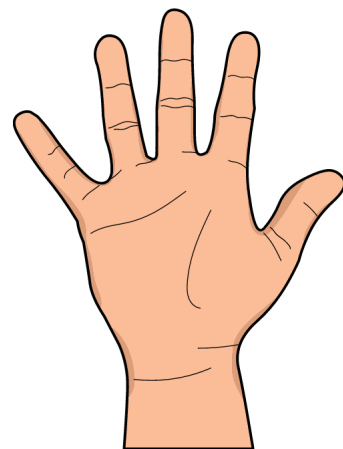
You've said it

4. Why can't you remember your homework? You're forgetting your homework a lot, let's figure out what we can do.

What is ADHD?



You've heard it



You've said it

5. You're smart, you should be doing better. Are you doing your best work?

Note: Some of these phrases are pretty mean, but we've all had those days when we're at wits end, and the frustrations get the best of us, no one is going to hold it against you.

There is probably a mix of up and down on both hands. If you have more fingers down on your right hand, you're probably a neurotypical person, which is a majority. If you have more fingers down on your left hand, then a congratulations could be in order for your neurodiversity.

Neurotypical vs Neurodiversity

Note: Neurotypicals are those who's brain functions in a way that works with most of society. Some may say normal...

"The extreme always seems to make an impression"



Note: I don't like to use the term normal, because that means the neurodiverse would be abnormal. A better term is expected, as in neurotypical act in an expected way. And the unexpected is exciting.

Neurotypicals go about their day, not wondering what that smell is, they always close the cupboard doors, they hold back from touching a person's sweater to see how it feels...

And they usually have their laundry folded and put away.

"Excellence is the result of caring more than others think is wise, risking more than others think is safe, dreaming more than others think is practical, and expecting more than others think is possible."

Note: Neurodiverse people are those whose brains work differently. ADHD is one of the neurological conditions under the neurodiverse umbrella, joining other conditions such as autism and dyslexia.

Being neurodiverse doesn't mean the person is not as intelligent or capable as a neurotypical, but they do have trouble working in a neurotypical world. And if you are a teacher working with neurodiverse students but you are neurotypical yourself, you may not understand why a student is having trouble.

The road to acceptance

Note: Last summer I finally went and got a physical, something I had been putting off for 30 odd years. My thinking is, why fix what isn't broke.

While there, I figured it was about time to ask about being ADHD. I had joked with our high school counselors previously, telling them that I was thinking that I may have ADHD, to which one replied, "You think?!?"

I was hesitant though. I knew it would help me, but after following what I could find on the internet and it not helping, I was leery of actually getting on any medication. Would I lose my personality?

I like my personality, although it's not everyone's cup of tea.

Diagnosed with ADHD

Note: I was diagnosed with ADHD at age 54 and now I get to live with the idea of what my life would have been like if I was diagnosed while still in school. Nah, who am I kidding, I don't think the school knew the meaning of the acronym.

In their defense, I was 11 when the term Attention Deficit Disorder was coined, renaming the disorder from hyperkinetic reaction of childhood. Interestingly enough, part of the reason for the name change was because hyperactivity was not a common symptom.

I graduated high school 1987, and no, I can't tell you what the great depression was like. However, that was the year when the disorder was renamed to what it is today, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

I do like how people seem to still have to explain ADHD even though it hasn't formally been called ADD for over 25 years. It's like ADD got married in '87 and everyone still calls it by its maiden name!

An ADHDer isn't always bouncing off the walls



Note: This is how a quiet student who doesn't make waves can fall through the cracks. Throughout elementary school I was always in the first or second row. Why? Because we were seated alphabetically going across the rows. I was still bored, not focused, and playing with made up toys in my desk, but I was quiet so the teacher didn't know anything was wrong with me.



Note: How did I know my teachers didn't know what was going on? I realized it in 7th grade when my English teacher put me in the back row. It was the first week of school and she asked me to read what was on the chalkboard. I chuckled and said, "I can't read that" because in my mind, no one could read the chalkboard from the back of the room.



Note: Apparently, I was very mistaken and was fitted with glasses not soon after. Now, not only do I think about what I missed out not being diagnosed with ADD, I also think about how many years I probably needed glasses! Why leaves? It seems that everyone remembers being able to see the individual leaves on trees after they walk out with their first pair of glasses.



Note: The students that have outward signs of ADHD are usually the ones that get identified and help, but we also need to look out for those students that may not appear to be neurodivergent.

Potential?

Note: So why did I sort of excel through school with As and Bs and not a single adult questioning my neuroabilities? I could see this being for a few different reasons.

1. Maybe everyone else in my classes set the bar low? No, that's not it.
2. Classroom layout was a big part of it. Back then, our desks were always in rows, and the seating chart was alphabetical, which meant with a C I was always in the first or second row.

3. The third and probably biggest reason could have been that I was quiet, kept my head down, and didn't disrupt class. I still got yelled out for creating toys out of objects in my desk though.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qa5v1a2H-xs>

Enough of the sad stuff, let's get to why ADHD is awesome!

Why having ADHD is awesome

- Enthusiasm
- Willingness to take risks
- Resilient
- Sense of humor
- Generous
- Creative
- Forgiving
- Hyperfocus
- Full of surprises

Note: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFCKa9CVzGU>

Executive Function

Note: It's a set of cognitive processes that help us self-regulate so we can effectively plan, prioritize, and sustain effort toward our (long term) goals. Going from wanting to do something to getting things done.

- Response inhibition - stop being impulsive

- Working memory -
- Set shifting - Context shifting between tasks and demands
- Delay Aversion - Delay immediate gratification

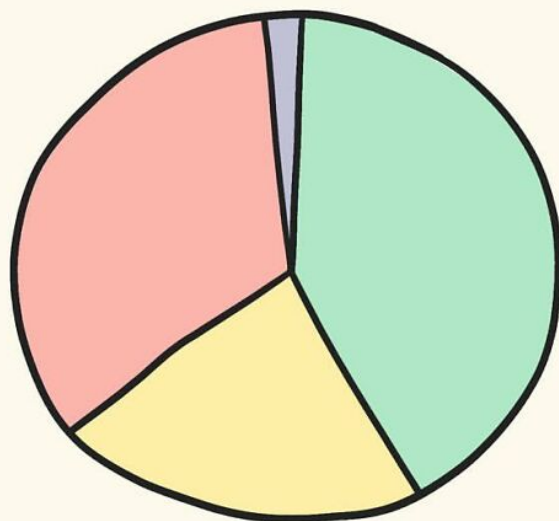
Everyone is different, may have more issues in one area than another.

So let's look at a few of the issues ADHDers have and what we can try to do to help.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4YIHrEu-TU&t=29s>

Fixing motivation

TRYING TO BE PRODUCTIVE



- THINK ABOUT BEING PRODUCTIVE
- WATCH CAT VIDEOS
- STRESS ABOUT NOT BEING PRODUCTIVE
- ACTUALLY BE PRODUCTIVE

@MOSTLYADHD

Note: Dr. Russell Barkley often refers to ADHD as Motivation Deficit Disorder.

ADHD have issues with tasks that are:

- Lengthy
- Repetitive
- Boring

However, tasks that are

- urgent
 - new
 - personal interest
- are good for ADHDers.

Making things urgent - Multiple progress checkins, timers. Don't say "don't worry about it", that takes away the urgency.

Making things new. Switch up locations, equipment, what you're doing. Gamification

Make it interested - Let the students have some agency in selecting books, homework, etc.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OM0Xv0eVGtY&t=4s>

Trying to start is just... terrible

Note: You've probably had a student that just didn't want to work. One of the hardest thing for an ADHDer to do is to start.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uo08uS904Rg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h10bsAeFNVk>

Eating the frog doesn't work

Note: The phrase "eating the frog" is a motto for doing the hardest task first. While that may work for a lot of people, it doesn't for the neurodivergent. They need a lot of willpower to start a task, but, as they successfully complete tasks it gets progressively easier for them. This means that they need to start with small tasks that open the door up to longer, more involved tasks.

So what can we do?

How do ADHDers get things done

Note: With these issues let's look what motivates ADHDers and how we can use that to help them get things done.

ADHDers are great in a crisis

Note: Why can't they get things done:

- With a sense of Urgency, ADHDers are great in a crisis
-



Note: The COVID years weren't fun for a lot of people, but they were some of the best years I've ever had professionally. Every day there were new problems to solve, situations to figure out. Decisions were not a drawn out process.

Easily distracted

Note: But, they are easily distracted but this can be minimized. For example, I have almost all notifications turned off on my phone, including texts and calls.

With the accessibility features, a triple-click of my lock button puts the screen into grayscale mode.

TikTok is just terrible at not being addictive, so I turned on screentime.

I'm in control of my phone, it doesn't control me.

WHEN YOU JUST START THE LESSON...



Oh, heck no

AND YOU HEAR THE PENCIL SHARPENER GO OFF

Note: This is one way I minimize distractions, for your students you'll want to concentrate on ways to minimize disruptions and other distractions in your classroom. What is your policy for asking for bathroom or a tissue, or dealing with other needs in the classroom?



Note: Procedures, procedures, procedures. Students should know how to ask for help, ask for the bathroom, enter the classroom, and transitions. Timers are a good way to give ADHDers a sense of urgency, and help with things like transitions.

Other tips include minimizing sounds in the classroom, allowing headphones during independent work, chill-out space.

Hyperfocus

When you've waited until the night before a project is due so you can guarantee hyperfocus



Note: Don't know when to stop.

Perfectionism

Note: Perfectionism - Can't start early because then you have all this time to keep going back at it.

Parkinson's Law is the adage that work will expand to fill the time allotted for its completion.

What can we do? The pomodoro technique.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YLk0ZhR0vA4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3QCaVC1Igc>

Pomodoro Technique

Note: The Pomodoro Technique is where you break work down into 25 minutes of work, then a 5 minute break, which is one Pomodoro. After 4 pomodoros you then take a 15 minute break. Now this isn't going to work in a classroom very well because of scheduling, but you can set it up where you have the students work for 25-35 minutes and then they get 5-10 minute break.

It works by breaking up tasks and time into more approachable chunks. We know when to started, to stay focuses, and when to end.



Note: Maybe you can't do the Pomodoro technique because of scheduling or building rules. You can try other variations of using different timers.

For a student with ADHD, just know that a task has a definite start and end time could make all the difference for to complete it.

Working memory

Note: The short term memory where things just need to be remember for a short time. The amount of things you can remember is less for ADHDers vs neurotypicals.



Behrad

@adhdmemetherapy



ADHD brain: "memory successfully saved."

Me: "where exactly?"

ADHD brain:



Note: Not only is there less space, the space they do have is also occupied by things that they are interested in, things they need to be doing, etc.

Things to do:

- Turn off notifications and distractions to minimize the things that take over working memory.
- Keep directions visible

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HszXKZO_H18

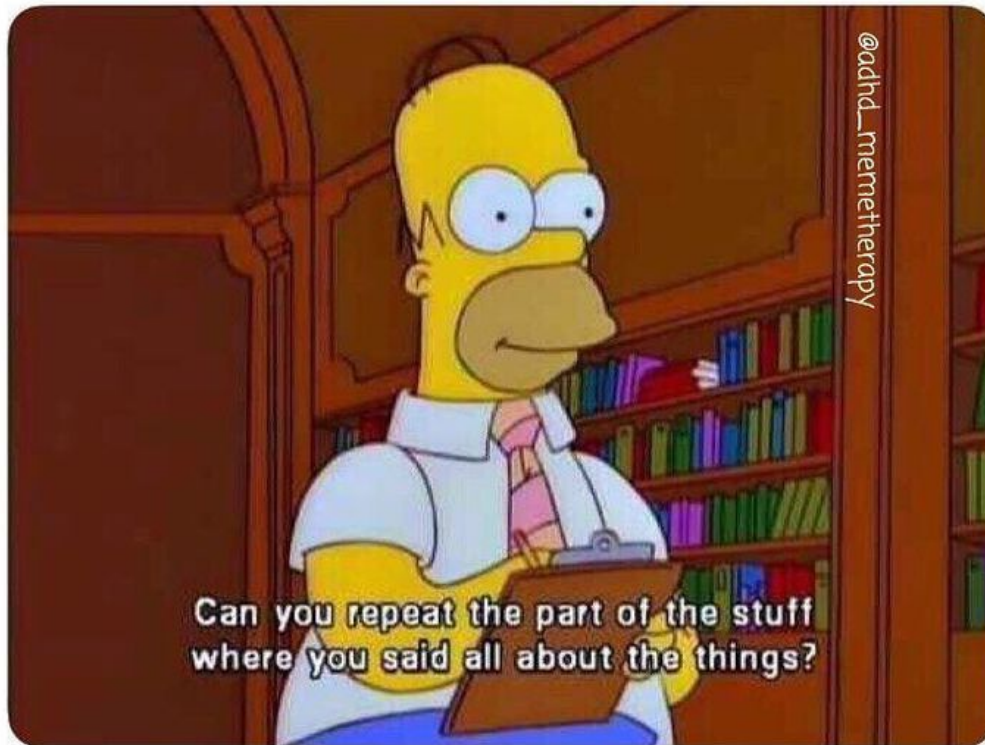
Interrupting

Note: post it notes, cards, writing it down

Bathroom/tissues/other needs while teaching vs small groups

Delayed processing

When my ADHD gives me a hard time remembering what someone just said to me:



Note: You've probably had a student who will almost immediately ask, "What are we supposed to do?" right after you've given directions. This is an aspect of delayed processing. They've received the information, it's just taking a little bit for them to realize what happened. If you give them a little bit of time, the light bulb will go off.

Boredom

Note: When boredom approaches, the neurodivergent will do things just to stimulate their brain. This can be in the form of acting

out, poking the bear, waiting to go to bed so you don't lie there waiting to fall asleep.

Obsidian Advanced Slides ![[2024-02-11-obsidian-screenshot.png]]

Note: Do you know what I do? I force myself to learn a new tool. For this presentaion I found out that my favorite Notetaking tool, Obsidian has a built in slide show feature. It's pretty barebones and while I was learning it, I found out that there was a plugin called Advanced Slides which I switched to.

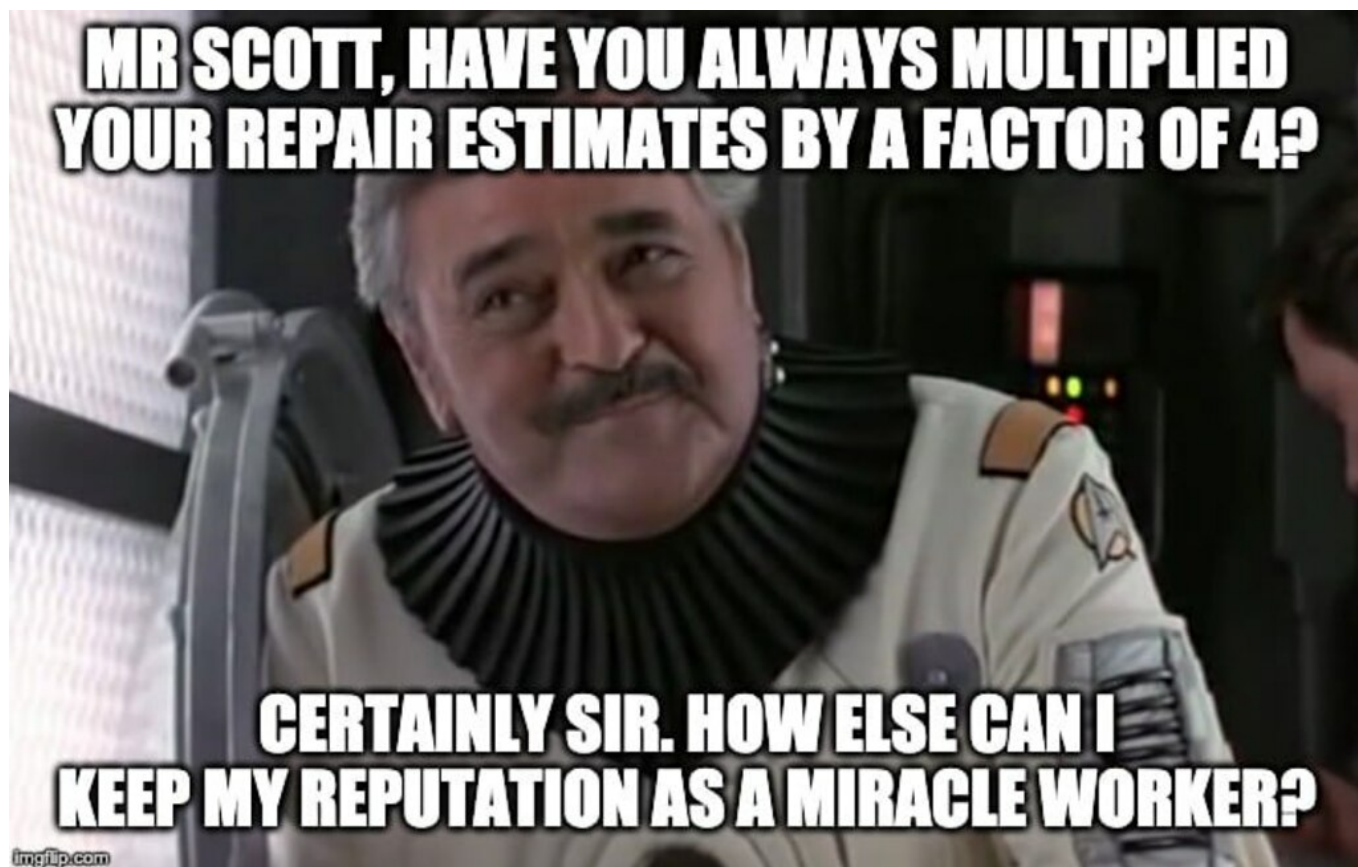


Note: However, that's probably not sustainable in the classroom. In the classroom, if a task appears to be pretty dull, it's even harder for an ADHDer to stay engaged.

Make things new, daydream, social, or fun.

Getting outside

Note: Recess is huge for kids with ADHD. It prevents isolation and releases energy. Research has shown that it can improve classroom performance lessen the symptoms of ADHD.



Time blindness

note: The neurodivergent struggle with thinking time is flying by and they aren't completing anything, all the while not having the ability to estimate the time to complete tasks.

How to ADHD ![How-to-ADHD.jpg]
(<https://cdn.collinsoft.com/file/cdn->

collinsoft/educ8.me/2024/2024-01-07-how-to-adhd/how-to-adhd-1024x.jpg)

Note: For more information, and where I got a lot of inspiration for this presentation, check out Jessica McCabe's [YouTube channel, How to ADHD](#).
