

How many stripes on a zebra?

Josie and Piper are drawing animal patterns on a huge piece of paper.

"I love school," says Josie. "Especially art. I really like drawing shapes and patterns in loads of different colours. And I'm excellent at English. I always get high grades for my stories. But maths? Ugh! The numbers are so confusing. They seem to float around in my head and my brain is always changing them into other numbers."

Piper nods. "Having dyscalculia can be hard. It makes it tricky to learn or understand numbers. It's really great that the other kids in our class try and help us. The songs they sing and the stories they make up about numbers help me to remember my times tables."

"I wish other people understood that dyscalculia isn't something that will go away," Josie says. "I'll always have it, but I am still just as smart as them."

Piper looks at their drawing. "Smart, and talented. Look how beautiful our animal patterns are!"

(Say: duhs-kal-KOO-lee-uh)

Paying too much attention

Jaden and Elsie love performing.

"I have a *lot* of energy," says Jayden. "I absolutely love telling funny and colourful stories. But sometimes all that energy gets me in trouble, particularly in school. I find it difficult to sit still and concentrate on my schoolwork, and I talk all the time."

Elsie nods. "A lot of people think I can't pay attention or sit still for very long. They think I'm being naughty and trying to cause trouble, but I'm not. The problem is, I pay too much attention! I see every detail, hear every sound, and pay attention to them all at once. With so much in my brain, I sometimes forget what I'm doing, or I pay attention to the wrong things."

Jaden and Elsie have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder – or ADHD for short. Someone with ADHD might find it hard concentrating and controlling their body, so might move around a lot.

"It's tough," says Jayden. "Sometimes, I feel like Sonic the Hedgehog, always running at top speed and never stopping to do one thing."

"I know what you mean," says Elise. "Some days I wish I could slow down and act like a turtle."

Giggling, the girls get on all fours. "Who says we can't be turtles?" Jayden says. "Last one to the wall wins!"

(Say: A-D-H-D)





That little bit extra

Sadie, Summer and Lee are in the hall. They are pretending to be ballet dancers.

"I'm smaller than my friends," says Sadie. "But I'm super strong. And I love gymnastics."

"I love dancing and singing," says Summer. "It can be hard for me to do all the moves because my muscles are still getting stronger, but I know one day I'll be a really great dancer!"

Lee laughs. "My friends think I'm pretty cool, because I have a superpower. I can make even the grumpiest people smile, and my hugs are THE BEST!"

Sadie, Summer and Lee have Down's syndrome. That means their chromosomes are different. Chromosomes are the body's building blocks. Everyone has them, but people with Down's syndrome have an extra one. That makes their bodies develop differently.

Lee adds, "Mum says having an extra chromosome makes me who I am. She says it makes me special. And even better, she says it gives her more of me to love!"

(Say: Down SIN-drowm)