

# Autism WebQuest



Name:

Date:

**Developmental Disorders:** compromise a group of conditions originating in childhood that involve serious impairment in different areas. These disorders comprise language, learning, motor and autism spectrum disorders.

## Autism:

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Read the following article and answer the questions below:

Although both of her twins seemed to behave normally when they were newborns, James's mother noticed that John looked at her when he was breastfeeding and James did not. At their first annual check-up, James's father remarked to the pediatrician that James didn't look at them when they talked to him, he didn't respond to the sound of their voices, and he preferred to play alone rather than with others – even his brother John.

The physician had tested James's hearing, and said that James did not seem to have abnormal hearing ability.

Perhaps John and James just had different kinds of personalities. After all, they certainly didn't look alike. But as time passed, James's parents became more and more concerned. By age 2, John said more words and spoke more clearly than James. John liked to play with other children, while James preferred to play alone, repetitively with the same toys.

At age 4, John and James started pre-kindergarten at a local school. After reading a report from the school district's speech and language therapist, James's mother sighed, "I hope James is just going through a stage and will grow out of it soon. She had consented to have the specialist meet with James so that his lisping and difficulty with being understood could be addressed by people with more expertise than she.

"The speech pathologist thinks that James has more than a speech problem, and that he should see the district's psychologist; I hope it's not autism," she told her husband.

"We've both known that there's more of a problem than his speech, but we've been reluctant to label it," replied her husband. "Although James and John are twins, they're so different. John seems so popular with the other children and defends James when kids or the teacher yell at him for taking toys or not listening. Now that James is in school, we need to do something more."

Frustrated, James's mother agreed with him, "James appears to be in his own world. If he keeps banging Thomas the Train against the table leg, the table is going to collapse—and so am I!"

After reading the article, what behaviors does James display that are not typical of boys with whom you are

1.

2.

familiar with?

3.

The following is the DSM (Diagnostic Statistical Manual) criteria for Autism. Your job is to look over James behavior and compare it to the DSM criteria.

(I) A total of six (or more) items from (A), (B), and (C), with at least two from (A), and one each from (B) and (C)

(A) qualitative impairment in social interaction, as manifested by at least two of the following:

1. marked impairments in the use of multiple nonverbal behaviors such as eye-to-eye gaze, facial expression, body posture, and gestures to regulate social interaction
2. failure to develop peer relationships appropriate to developmental level
3. a lack of spontaneous seeking to share enjoyment, interests, or achievements with other people, (e.g., by a lack of showing, bringing, or pointing out objects of interest to other people)
4. lack of social or emotional reciprocity ( note: in the description, it gives the following as examples: not actively participating in simple social play or games, preferring solitary activities, or involving others in activities only as tools or "mechanical" aids )

(B) qualitative impairments in communication as manifested by at least one of the following:

1. delay in, or total lack of, the development of spoken language (not accompanied by an attempt to compensate through alternative modes of communication such as gesture or mime)
2. in individuals with adequate speech, marked impairment in the ability to initiate or sustain a conversation with others
3. stereotyped and repetitive use of language or idiosyncratic language
4. lack of varied, spontaneous make-believe play or social imitative play appropriate to developmental level

(C) restricted repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests and activities, as manifested by at least two of the following:

1. encompassing preoccupation with one or more stereotyped and restricted patterns of interest that is abnormal either in intensity or focus
2. apparently inflexible adherence to specific, nonfunctional routines or rituals
3. stereotyped and repetitive motor mannerisms (e.g hand or finger flapping or twisting, or complex whole-body movements)
4. persistent preoccupation with parts of objects

(II) Delays or abnormal functioning in at least one of the following areas, with onset prior to age 3 years:

(A) social interaction

(B) language as used in social communication

(C) symbolic or imaginative play

(III) The disturbance is not better accounted for by Rett's Disorder or Childhood Disintegrative Disorder

What aspects of James behavior, as described by his parents seem to fit the DSM criteria of Autism? You just write out the numbers ex. 1a and describe briefly ex. Lack of eye contact.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

View the following Ted Talk with Temple Grandin. [Click here](#)

Summarize what you learned, what surprised you, thoughts on Temple Grandin, changes in how you viewed Autism, what can we do from the Ted Talk in one paragraph.