



# eatonarrowsmith

Center for Neuroeducation

## Keys to Success: Suggestions of things to do prior to arriving:

It is not required that a student do these things, and if it causes stress on the student, or tension between you and the student, then please do not worry about it as we can work with the student once they are here. However, if these things can be done prior to arrival or/and reinforced during the year, that would help us to get off the ground running.

Most of our students need to work on **Symbol Relations**, which we call the *Clocks* program. This area addresses reasoning and conceptual understanding (<http://www.eatoncognitive.com/the-19-brain-exercises/>). Prior to beginning the *Clocks* exercise students should be able to do a few things automatically with ease. If these prerequisite counting drills could be practiced prior to coming to the program it would be useful. These include:

- a. Counting by 1's – 60 forward and backwards
- b. Counting by 5' – 60 forward and backwards
- c. Counting by 12's Counting (forwards only) 12, 24, 36,48,60

Eventually, these all need to be done *with no hesitations*. If a student has difficulty with a section, the best thing to do is just repeat that section until it is smooth and then continue on. For example: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9,10. If the student skips 8 then have them just repeat 6,7,8,9, several times until that is smooth and then start from 1 again.

**Very young children** will need to understand more basic concepts like *before* and *after* and may not be ready for these counting drills yet.

If the student has difficulty with mental math, this is an area we call **Quantification Sense** or Q-Sense. (<http://www.eatoncognitive.com/the-19-brain-exercises/>) If you know your child will require work in this exercise it would be useful to ensure they can count by 2's by even and odd numbers with no hesitations. As with the counting drills above, if a student has trouble with a section, simply practice that section until the student can say it with ease and then go back and do a longer strand. Students should always start by practicing with lower starters (numbers up to 30 first) and then when those are solid move to higher starters into the hundreds. Even if they can be solid counting by even and odd numbers to 30 that would be a good foundation to be able to start the **Quantification Sense** Program.

## **Numeric keypad**

Helping students master the numeric keypad on a computer is important for two of the exercises they will probably do at EA. There is one usually on the right of the keyboard, not the one across the top. All students will need to be able to do this in order to eventually make the most gain out of two exercises- Clocks (Symbol Relations) and Quantification Sense. The students that have very little conceptual understanding will not use this yet because they need more foundational concepts, but starting to learn it will still be important. Even our youngest students do eventually learn the motor plan for the numeric keypad. Though it may not seem possible, these kids often are better at texting, etc., than we are and it is the same idea. They do need to learn the correct Motor Plan, not hunting and pecking. While they will work on this a bit here, we don't want them to waste too much time doing this as it is time better spent on the cognitive exercises. You can download practice from Typing Master, which is what we use. <http://www.typingmaster.com/typing-tutor/free-demo-download.asp>

**Auditory:** Though we do address auditory processing, some students have underlying issues that are more complex and they may benefit from having an in-depth assessment from an audiologist with specific training in this. The auditory system is complex and we want to make sure it is working optimally to increase their benefits in the Arrowsmith Program. One condition, called Hyperacusis, is the one that is hypersensitivity to sound. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyperacusis>) If you suspect your child has difficulty with this it would be worth checking out. If the student has had a lot of speech and language issues it may be that the underlying problems are actually input, not output (auditory). Students with these difficulties may have developed other auditory processing problems because of it and also may seem very distractible. We have several auditory exercises that they may be programmed for here, but if they do have more complex auditory difficulties it would be of benefit for them to get this checked. Please talk to me regarding how to possibly do that.

## **Keys to Success at EAA:**

### **General tips to ensure smooth transition and a successful program:**

These are just some general tips that we have found to be beneficial to students in the program. Details follow below: Good sleep, exercise and fun, proper nutrition (low sugar, balanced meals) mindfulness training (things like meditation, yoga, and the Mindup Program- which we implement.)

- **Mental Health Concerns:** Though students often have mental health issues due to the many years of frustration or because of specific cognitive issues which may be addressed through the program, students with these issues still need support. Even young children can have these difficulties. Every year we are increasingly aware of the impact that depression and anxiety have on our students due to their years of struggle. Please put in place appropriate support to help make their time here more beneficial. This includes: therapists and/or psychiatrists, and medication if needed. Let's discuss this if there are concerns.

- **Activities:**

Though students come to work on their cognitive difficulties, it is important that we focus on the whole individual. Students are most successful here when they have balanced lives, which include enjoyable activities outside of the program where they can also have opportunities to be connected socially. Over the years we have found that even older students tend to need assistance organizing activities either due to difficulties with planning and/or difficulties with social cues and situations.

- **Employment:**

If you have an older child they may want to hold a job. We understand that our students are anxious to move forward. However, regarding employment, we have found that students are not aware of how much energy this program requires and often can only manage a few hours a week of work. If they have extra time and energy it may be best for them to add an activity they enjoy! This will complement the program.