

# USING A SWITCH IN... Elementary School

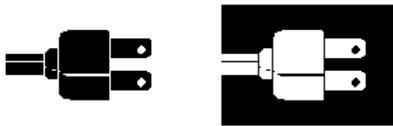
## Functional Routines

It is important to develop a repertoire of switch activities that are reinforcing and functional for your student. These activities should include as many of the senses as possible and incorporate social contact and praise from adults or peers. Motivation is the key!!

When switch access is new, opportunities for practice may need to occur both in a resource room with one to one situation as well as in the classroom. For switch use to have the most ongoing meaning, it needs to happen in a functional context as part of a routine that the student does on a regular basis.

## Daily Activities

Switch use has various functions. It can help to teach the student cause and effect and allow him/her to access voice output devices, take part in individual or group leisure activities and be a helper with a job to do at home, or in the classroom, school or community. Encourage peers to try the switch as well. **It reinforces the use of the switch and places value on technology as the way the student interacts with his/her environment.**



A switch can be attached to almost any electrical device using an Abenet Powerlink. **Use of these electrical devices in the classroom is intended to**

**enhance a student's learning on their particular goals.** Some electrical appliances that could be used in the classroom include:

blender  
can opener  
card shuffler  
conveyor belt  
coffee pot  
desk lamp  
fan/spinner  
food processor  
foot bath  
hair dryer  
hand held massager  
ice cream machine

juicer  
lamp  
magnifier lamp  
make-up mirror  
malt machine  
mixer  
organ  
Paint 'N Swirl  
paper shredder  
pencil sharpener  
popcorn popper  
power tools

sewing machine  
scissors  
Spinner  
stapler  
stereo  
tape recorder  
toaster  
vibrating pad  
vibrating pillow  
vibrating slippers



Classmates can join the student in A Nail Club. The student can...

- Run the nail dryer with a switch and the Powerlink
- Make choices about colours and activities using objects or pictures

Pair voice output with the Powerlink

## Battery Operated Devices

Battery adapters are available for AA, C, D, and A batteries. When ordering adapters, make sure to specify the size needed.

These are some tips for purchasing battery-operated toys or appliances (e.g. All-Turn-It Spinner, fans) for use in a simple technology system:

- Purchase battery-operated toys with an on/off switch and those powered by AA, C or D size batteries.
- If the toy runs on a track the battery compartment and on/off switch must be located on the track rather than on a movable piece.
- Toys that travel and spin are likely to get caught up in the wires of the battery device adapter.
- Consider the age appropriateness of the toys you buy. Very young children typically enjoy many battery-operated toys. However, there is a selection of items that may also be appropriate for creative play for older students.

## Activities for Using Switches in the Classroom

### Math

- A Litebrite can be illuminated by the student with a switch. Classmates could be responsible for making the pattern: sort the pegs into colour groups, design patterns, make geometric shapes.
- Use the switch with an All-Turn-It Spinner to give classmates numbers for a math lotto game to reinforce a math concept.



### Computer

- Make posters for class presentations or projects (e.g., a partner chooses menus and a switch is used to activate a menu choice).
- Try interactive switch games. Play with a partner to work on turn taking.

### Science or Social Studies

- Use Paint 'N Swirl to create backgrounds for socials and science projects and displays. The student chooses the colours.
- Paper shredders can be operated with a switch and control unit to create bedding material for class pets (i.e., gerbils).
- Use switch operated mixer to make playdoh or cookie dough for model making. The student can make some colour choices.
- Have the student make popcorn with a popcorn popper before a movie.

### P.E.

- Use the switch with a timer for timed sports and games.
- Use a BigMack with pre-recorded instructions or directions for classmates during team sports.

### Music



- Play music using a switch and Apple device (iPod, iPad, iPhone) along with the Hook and switch interface (available from Ablenet).

### Art

- Use a mixer and switch to mix cookie dough, paper mache or playdoh for art projects. Playdoh and cookie dough can be molded into thematic objects (dinosaurs, letters, spacecraft).
- Use a Paint 'N Swirl to make abstract designs for classmates. These designs can be used as backgrounds for other projects or as stationary for: place mats, writing paper, gift or special occasion cards. Cardboard designs could be cut out and coated for brooches, earrings and refrigerator magnets.
- Use a popcorn popper to make popcorn art projects. The student can choose the colours of powder paint to add to the popcorn.
- The student could illuminate a mirror for a face painting session.

### Jobs & Daily Living Activities

- Help prepare snack or lunch by operating the blender and/or microwave.
- Operate a food processor to slice vegetables for salad or dinner.
- The student can participate in leisure type activities by playing the radio or music.
- Grind coffee beans in the staff room.
- Operate the office paper shredder with the Powerlink.
- Help peers sharpen pencils in the classroom as needed. (game last night?").

*These are some suggestions to get you started. Use your imagination and local resources to determine other opportunities. The purpose is to increase the student's opportunities for using the switch to work on his/her individual learning goals in a variety of ways throughout the day.*