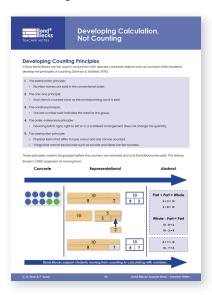


# Supporting Students with Learning Difficulties

A significant strength of Bond Blocks is that it has been designed to cater for students who experience learning difficulties. These Teacher Notes outline the features of the Bond Blocks System and Activity Boards that can support students with a range of learning difficulties.

For information to support students with Specific Learning Difficulties in Mathematics (Dyscalculia) please read the **Teacher Notes** "Developing Calculation Not Counting".

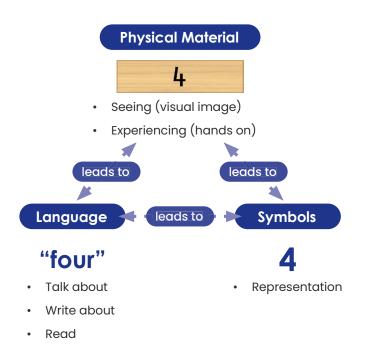


# **Bond Block System Features:**

These features have been built into the Bond Block System to support students with learning difficulties:

## **Explicit Connections**

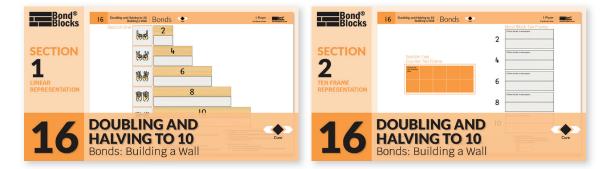
Bond Blocks are explicitly linked to the appropriate mathematical language and symbols.



#### **Video Modelled Teaching**

Every activity is modelled in a video. These videos model **how to complete the activity**, but more importantly they model **connecting the mathematical manipulatives**, **language and symbols** to help students develop a robust understanding of the mathematical concept.

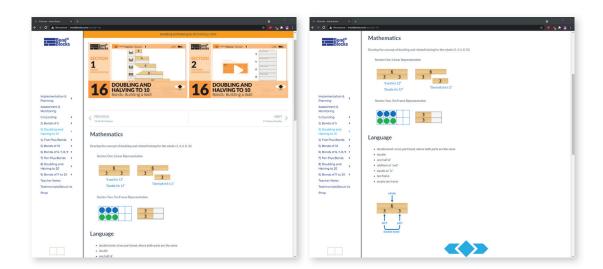
The videos are short, give clear direct instructions and are free from distracting visuals.



#### They can be:

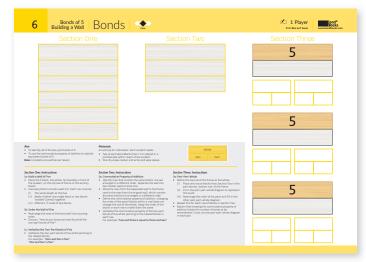
- · Used by teachers to introduce the activity to students.
- Used by teachers when instructing Education Assistants about the activity. Teachers introduce the activity in the
  first session of the week. Education Assistants can oversee students repeat the activity, the same week, to develop
  fluency.
- Watched independently by students. Some students like to watch the video to begin the second session of the
  week, as a reminder of what to do, before repeating the activity to develop fluency. Students who are anxious or
  find change difficult can find it helpful to watch the video independently before seeing the teacher introduce the
  activity for the first time that week.
- Watched by parents who may oversee fluency practice when their children bring activities home. Children with learning difficulties benefit from coordinated, consistent support through strong partnerships between home and school.

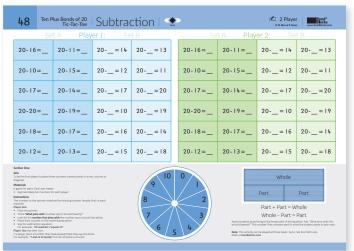
The website outlines the specific mathematics and language needed for every activity, supporting teachers to give clear, correct mathematical instruction.

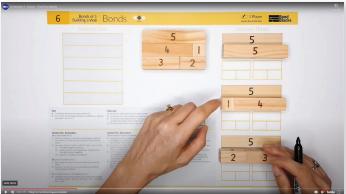


#### Repetition of activities

The sequence and type of activities are repeated in each chapter. For example, the first activity in each chapter is building bond a wall. There are a minimal number of different types of activities. Most activities are based on Building a Wall or Tic-Tac-Toe. Developing procedural fluency with the activity enables students to focus on engaging in the mathematics.







Payor 1:

20-16 = 20-11 = 20 - = 14 | 20 - = 13 | 20-16 = 20-11 = 20 - = 14 | 20 - = 13 | 20-16 = 20-17 = 20 - = 17 | 20 - = 20 | 20-17 = 20 - = 10 | 20 - = 19 | 20-18 = 20-17 = 20 - = 16 | 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 16 | 20 - = 14 | 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 16 | 20 - = 14 | 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 16 | 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 - = 18 | 20-17 = 20 | 20-17 = 20 | 20-18 | 20-17 = 20 | 20-18 | 20-17 = 20 | 20-17 | 20-17 = 20 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 | 20-17 |

**Building a Wall Activity** 

**Tic-Tac-Toe Activity** 

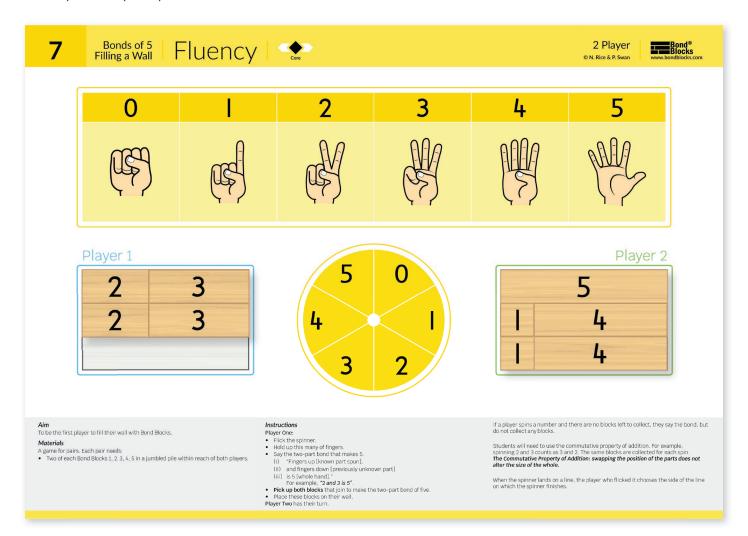
### Gradual increases in difficulty

The mathematics within the Bond Block system has been broken down into carefully sequenced steps. Each activity increases in difficulty by one step and builds on the mathematics in prior activities.

Please note, that whilst activities appear the same from chapter to chapter they **change subtly** to increase the level of difficulty. These key changes are pointed out in the video and written on the activity board in bold. Please look out for these changes and highlight them to students.

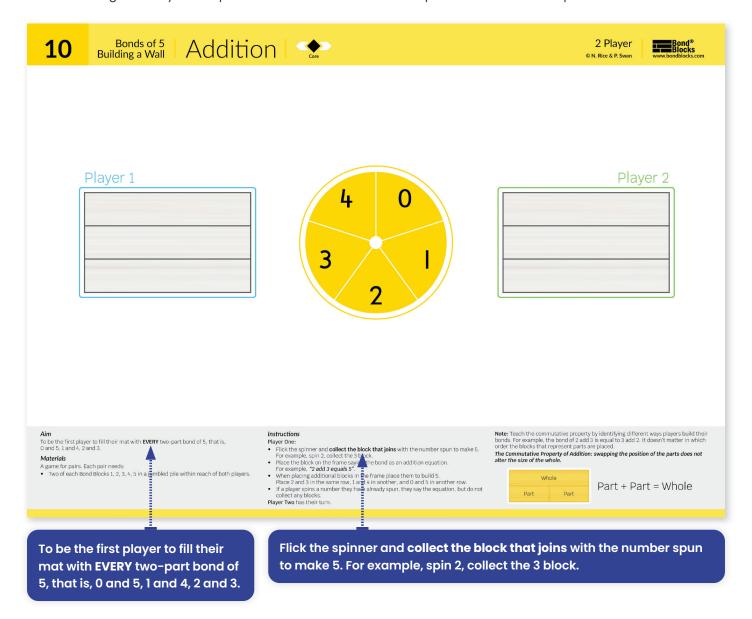
For example, the first-time students Build a Wall as a 2 Player game they:

- Have to fill their wall but can use any combination of blocks that make five. This means they can repeat bonds in their wall. Such as placing a row of 2 and 3 twice.
- They have to pick up both blocks that make the bond.



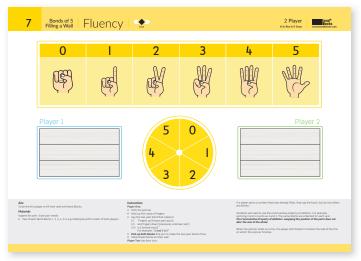
However, when this Build a Wall game appears for the second time it is slightly harder. They:

- Have to build every bond of five. That is zero and five, one and four, two and three. They are not allowed to repeat a bond such as placing two and three twice.
- Only place one block, the answer to the equation, because this is the emphasis of the addition activity. Whereas in the earlier game they had to place both blocks because the emphasis was on the two-part bond.



#### A multisensory approach.

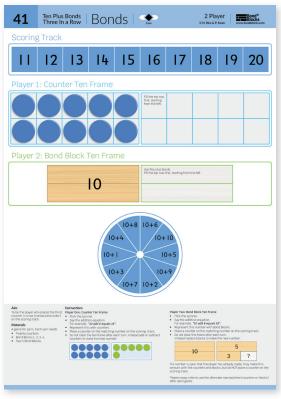
Activities involving doing, seeing, saying, and hearing. Students do the activity with their blocks hands, see the visual representation, say the bond aloud and hear others say it. Actions and statements to be said are specifically *stated* on the activity boards in **bolded italics**. The aim is to increase neurological connections, understanding and memory retention.





#### Additional support activities.

Every activity is differentiated. See the Bond Block's activity web page for adjustment suggestions and ready-to-go download activities to make the activity a little easier.

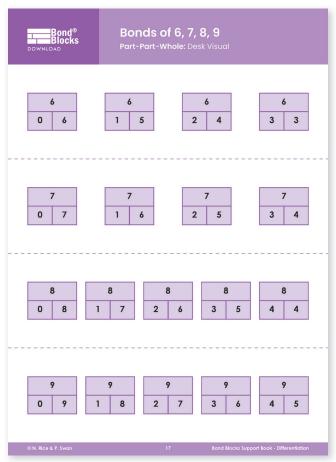


Activity 41 additional support activities.



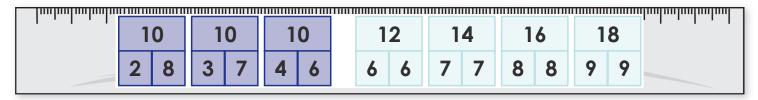
#### Supportive of students with memory difficulties.

Students who have difficulty remembering bonds can be supported by downloading part-part-whole visuals. Students use these when playing games. Using the visual support frees the student's working memory and allows them to engage in the higher order mathematic thinking, such a developing calculation strategies and problem solving.



Desk Visual Download for Two-Part Bonds of 6, 7, 8, 9

Small sized, part-part-whole visual strip for difficult to remember bonds of 10 and doubles. Download and tape this to the back of a ruler for discrete use by older or self-conscious students.



For more information about how to use desk visuals read the Teacher Notes "Using Part-Part-Whole Desk Visuals".

# **Activity Board Features**

These features have been built into the Bond Block Activity Boards to support students with learning difficulties:

#### Free of visual distraction

This supports students with visual discrimination difficulties. The aesthetics of the game boards have been designed to be sensitive of older students using them for Wave 3 intervention.

#### Played in pairs

This increases the amount of time spend practising the skill and reduces the amount of time available for the student to become distracted.

#### Embedded with student accountability measures for:

- i) correct practice of mathematics.
   Bond blocks are self-checking. Frames on the boards ensure correct placement of blocks.
- ii) correct use of mathematical language.
   The correct mathematical language to be used is written on the activity board.
- students' cognitive participation.

  Accountability measures are built into games. Each player has a role. For example, if the watching player identifies an incorrect calculation they move forward 3 spaces and the player in error moves back 2 spaces.

#### Always orientated correctly

- · Students engage in activities students sitting side by side.
- The A3 game board and blocks are positioned directly in front of each student.
- Player One is always coloured blue and positioned on the left. Player Two is green and on the right.

These measures help to reduce visual tracking and physical coordination difficulties.

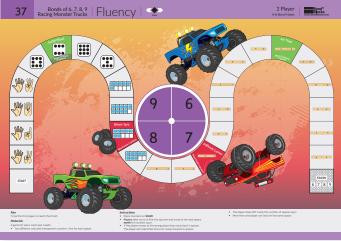
Sitting side by side is non-confrontational for students with autism spectrum disorders.



#### **Consistent Features of Activity Boards**

- **Player One** is always blue, sits on the left and goes first. **Player Two** is always green, sits on the right and goes second. The boards and counters are colour coded blue and green.
- On track-based activity boards landing on a **green space** means move forward 3 spaces. Landing on a **red space** means move back 2 spaces. This supports students with reading difficulties.





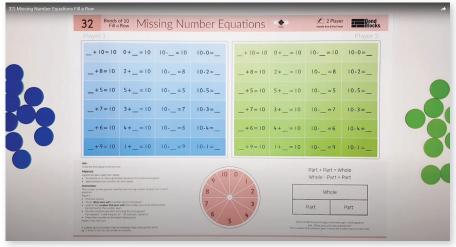
#### Used with minimal equipment.

Game boards are used with spinners because they facilitate efficient set up, are quite and do not contain loose pieces to distract or fall on the floor.

When activities or games require a concrete representation counters are used.

• Counters with a 25 millimetre diameter were chosen because they are easier to manipulate. The counters are blue and green to match the blue and green player colours.





Player 2 Is always green, positioned on this side.

- However, students with attentional difficulties can find using counters distracting. Students with coordination
  difficulties can find manipulating counters difficult. Frustration can occur when counters are knocked or moved.
   Two ways to accommodate for this difficulty are:
  - place a small piece of sticky tack under each counter. The sticky tack works well with the plastic A3 sleeves in which the boards are placed.
  - use one dry erase marker/pair of students instead of counters. Students record moves on track games by writing an initial and draw tally marks in scoring tables. Having one marker/pair reduces opportunities for students to use the marker inappropriately.