

## Answers to True or False

- 1 **False** Many autistic people don't mind eye-contact, but some don't like it and find neurotypical people wanting to stare at people eye-balls really strange!
- 2 **False** There have been films, TV programmes and books that have portrayed autistic people as good at maths and some are. But not all. There is as much variety in the subjects that autistic people like as neurotypical people.
- 3 **True** Many autistic people hide their traits to fit in to neurotypical society. This is more common in girls than boys which means that girls are less likely to be recognised as autistic than boys.
- 4 **True** Although many autistic people find sensory input from bright lights overwhelming, many autistic people don't. This is the same for other sensory experiences. If you are not sure if your autistic friend is comfortable with the sensory environment they are in, ask them!
- 5 **False** Neurodivergent people's brains work differently so they are better at some things than neurotypical people but find other things more difficult. People with ADHD, Dyslexia and Dyspraxia can also be described as neurodivergent.
- 6 **False** A meltdown happens when an autistic person cannot process the sensory messages that are being received by their brain. It is not something they have control over. To prevent meltdowns it is important for an autistic person to be able to remove themselves from a situation where they feel the sensory input is getting too much. This might be by wearing

headphones to cope with noise, using a fidget toy to refocus attention away from what is causing the problem, or moving to a safe and quiet space until the meltdown is over.

- 7 **True** More boys are diagnosed with autism than girls, but we are starting to recognise that because autistic girls have different traits than autistic boys, they are less likely to receive a diagnosis or receive it when they are older. This means that they are not getting the help they need and are often thought to have anxiety or other mental health issues rather than be on the autism spectrum.
- 8 **False** Everyone responds to a shutdown differently so it is best to ask what would be most helpful. If it is someone you don't know very well it is probably best to make sure they are in a quiet and calm environment and keep at a distance until they feel better.
- 9 **False** The autism spectrum is not a straight line. Some autistic people have more difficulties with friendships or emotions, some autistic people have advanced skills in focus or recognising patterns. What is easy in some situations may not be in others. It is not helpful to use labels like high functioning for this reason.
- 10 **True** Autistic people often have excellent attention to detail. They often think in a very visual way so they can be excellent at art. A lot of autistic people have hyperlexia which means they can learn to read when they are very young. Some autistic people see their autism as a superpower. There are a lot of very successful autistic people such as the environmentalist Greta Thunberg, richest man in the world Elon Musk and the creator of Pokemon, Satoshi Tajiri. Lots of other famous people such as Albert Einstein are also



thought to have been autistic even though we didn't know about autism when he was growing up.