Competencies
S2 Demonstrates the ability to adapt, modify, or structure the environment based on an understanding of which auditory, visual or other sensory stimuli may be distracting, offensive, reinforcing, or calming for the individual student under the direction of licensed staff.

Concept to Practice

Sensory Arousal Modulation

Read the scenario and then answer the questions that follow.

Scenario
Mitch, an eleven year old boy with ASD, is late to school today. Upon arriving in class, Mitch moves frantically about the classroom, even though his classmates are seated and involved in an activity. Mitch’s mother, who usually brings him to school, was unable to do so this morning because of an important appointment. Mitch’s older sister, who brought him to school on this day, tells you that Mitch was running late because he had trouble adjusting to the change in his morning routine.

Questions
Considering the content of this lesson and the above scenario, answer the following questions.

1. What behaviors and arousal modulating strategies might Mitch exhibit in his high arousal state?
2. What kinds of adaptations might be made in the classroom to promote an optimal level of arousal for Mitch on such a day?

3. How might you expect a person whose sensory arousal is low to act?

4. What kind of environment might promote greater sensory arousal for someone whose arousal is low?