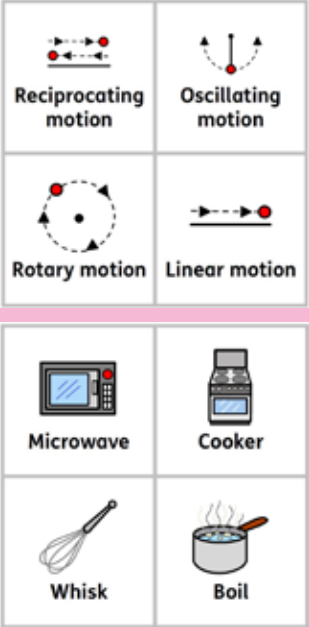# PRACTICE

**DESIGN &
TECHNOLOGY
ASSOCIATION**

Fostering inclusivity in design and technology education

Lol Conway, Curriculum Consultant

As a teacher of design and technology I have constantly strived to foster inclusivity, ensuring that every student, regardless of their abilities or needs, can fully engage in my lessons. Since joining the Design & Technology Association, my passion for championing the success of students with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) in our subject has intensified from speaking to so many teachers wanting advice and guidance in this area as well as meeting teachers and visiting establishments working so successfully with these students.
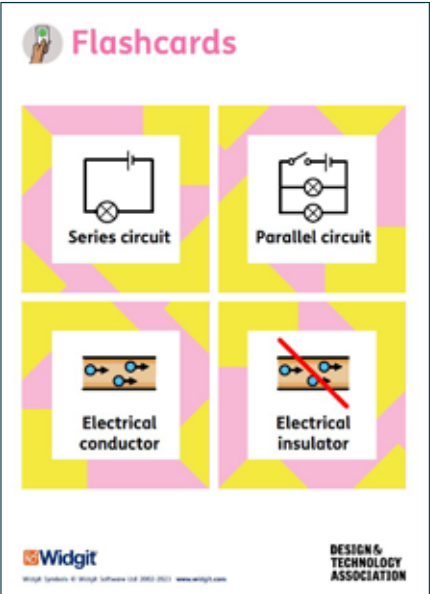

At the Association we are constantly looking at ways to ensure *all* students are supported with the highest quality of teaching from the wonderful teachers we have teaching our subject and so will be continuing to develop ideas and resources for SEND students in mind.

New Widgits

As part of our ongoing work we have looked into accessible symbols that are predominantly used for people with learning disabilities. Whilst Widgit had already introduced some of these symbols for our subject, it was evident that the landscape of technology and our subject's ever evolving requirements necessitated more specific and updated versions.

The comprehensive resource of accessible symbols has been created in conjunction with Widgit and has resulted in an invaluable resource for teachers wanting to make accessible materials for their D&T rooms and teaching/learning resources. They can be used in Primary, Secondary and Specialist SEND settings depending on the needs of your students.

Sue White, Senior Education Specialist at Widgit, commented:

'*It has been a pleasure to work with the Design & Technology Association and support them in their aim to be more inclusive within their area of expertise. Our symbol designers have enjoyed creating symbols for the specific tools and concepts within Design and Technology and we are looking forward to including the full set of new Design and Technology symbols on our symbol database in the coming academic year.*'

Adding visual support

The resource uses pictorial symbols, either as an alternative to text or to accompany it. It adds visual support to the printed word, opening up the world of information to those who may otherwise be excluded from it. These can also be used to reduce EAL language barriers, enable independent learning, create social stories, labelling tools and equipment and much more. Schools can use these downloadable PDF D&T symbols as they wish, e.g. cut, paste, resize.

You can find PDF versions of these symbols on our website

www.designtechnology.org.uk/resource-shop/sen-communication-symbols/

with the first set of 40 free for all schools. We then have an additional 40 symbols for D&T Association members and if you have the Widgit InPrint 3 software you can also access these in a wordlist format.

It is imperative that all students regardless of their needs feel supported in design and technology and we are dedicated to fostering an inclusive and enriching learning environment so that students have the opportunity to experience success. We feel that these accessible symbols will hopefully help to support all of the hard work teachers are already doing in the classroom to make this happen.