

Hello, sue. I'm here today with Bob and the team from included from LGfL, and we're looking at the CENMAC conference and obviously Widgeit, you've already got a connection with LGfL because your lovely symbols are there. So I guess I would start with why is it important to attend this conference?

I think it's important for Widgeit to be here to just show the symbols set. Obviously, we license our symbols into a lot of the devices that are being shown at Cenmac, so we want to be here to be able to explain how that symbol set is made up. What's different about widget symbols from other symbols, but also just to encourage people as they're looking around, about the use of symbols to support accessibility within the classroom?

Yeah, you know, I'm a long term fan of Widget symbols, but for people who are new to this and there are we've got new students and new early years teachers, do you want to just give me a quick kind of why a symbol should be an integral part of our early education?

Yeah, absolutely. So we're all visual learners very early on until our brains lateralize at around age seven. We're very visual in terms of our learning, so I think it's just really part of an emergent learning experience. But moving on, we process symbols and visuals much more quickly than we process language. And a symbol is very concise and goes straight to the point of the vocabulary that you're trying to get people to understand. Whereas if you have a photograph, it sometimes has peripheral information in it and background information that can detract from that symbol. Photos are important, don't get me wrong, but when you're trying to get across vocabulary and something very quickly, then the symbol is very direct because it's very precise and concise.

So I'm going to ask you the million dollar question. Are you ready? Okay. How do symbols support inclusion and inclusive practice in education?

Okay, so symbols mean that anybody can access what's written because it's giving them the understanding of that vocabulary. Symbols will help with inclusion because young people who have problems processing language or poor memory, the words just disappear, they're transitory, but a symbol is permanent. So if you've got a visual timetable, everything's there, you can see what's happening. You don't need to be told again and again, they help with independence. So inclusion is about making children independent, being able to learn themselves, and because the child knows that they can go to the drawer and pick up the equipment that they need, they're included in everything where you've got English as additional language within a school. And young people then obviously having symbols means that they're included because they can understand what's again, what's written and understand what's said. So it's just part of that.

Huge. Thanks for giving us five minutes of your time, and please just send the message back to Widgeit. Keep doing what you're doing? Because it's brilliant. Thank you.