

Five, seven, three, eight, ten, seven, two, one, fifteen, nine. Match these blocks to these holes without looking. How fast can you solve this puzzle? What is the correlation between a banana and the number 'two'? The tests started to blur in front of my tired eyes. The lights glared, the pencil I was given was too dull and crumbly, and the blank wall reminded me of a book I had read three years ago. I was left on page fifty three. That reminded me—

“Five, three, seven, two, eight... I can't remember the rest.” I stared at my instructor, whose smile slowly dropped off her face. This was stupid. I was stupid. I had remembered the sequence of numbers just fine a few moments ago, but the combination of the pencil in my hand and the noises from the other room blotted out everything else in my mind. *Unfair*, I thought to myself. *This world was unfair for people like me.*

After all the struggles of testing, my results came out a few weeks later. Amidst the cascade of professional medical terminology, my results were in miniscule font at the very last page. **ADHD inattentive, mild depression, anxiety.** Suddenly everything seemed so clear.

Ever since I was a kid, I was lost in my own world. I was very easily distracted and would often quietly move onto another task if I deemed the first 'too boring'. This wasn't a problem when I was a child, but as I grew up, I found that I had no interest in any activities. I never felt fulfilled when I finished complicated problems, and I was constantly seeking positive stimulation like video games or music to keep myself happy and interested for a long period of time.

This impacted my academics greatly, my grades dropping because of the fact that I could not concentrate on tests, nor could I exert my best effort on subjects that I did not find intellectually stimulating enough. As the year progressed, it seemed as if my self-worth stemmed only from my declining level of academics and my slowly waning attention span. Everyone else could focus, no one was fidgeting aimlessly in their seat, and everyone could follow directions without missing a step or having to be reminded. Meanwhile, I was forgetting assignments and lagging behind in my attempts to stay on top of things in Freshman year.

Unable to bear the blockade of my own mind, I sought a therapist to help me work through my issues, who was the person that first recommended the ADHD diagnosis to me. Using her advice, I hunted for ways to at least suppress my disorder without medication, creating schedules and writing lists in order to attempt some semblance of efficiency in my chaotic life. I even sought out sports that would help improve my concentration, picking up archery after hours of debate with my parents. My grades started improving from what they were in the middle of Freshman year, and I was almost consistently scoring in the mid-eighties to high nineties on subjects that I previously had struggles with. I even started to study with a timer, something I had been repulsed by before therapy. Encouraged by my growth, I started to try and push myself beyond my boundaries; even starting to enter writing competitions with a time constraint to get past my tendency to procrastinate.

Now, as a Sophomore in high school, I plan to continue moving forward as a person, in order to prove that neurodivergents are just as capable as neurotypicals in the field of academics even despite the discrimination that surrounds those with disabilities. The blocks were neatly deposited in four minutes. I solved the puzzle in two minutes. Both the banana and the number two reminded me of a yellowish shade, and my score on the literacy and analysis portion was exemplary.