

# Tips for using puzzles with a loved one

## What you need

- A comfortable quiet space without distractions.
- A flat table top, tray, or something firm.
- A 2B or B pencil, sharpener, eraser. Maybe colored pencils for fine motor skill shading and a highlighter for word search?

## General principles

- Some people will prefer to do the puzzles alone—and enjoy it. Others will need a lot of encouragement and support.
- The sense of sharing and connection as you work together on a puzzle is just as important as the puzzles themselves.
- When it's hard to make conversation, the discussion prompts and the quizzes will get you both chatting.
- It doesn't matter if you're not a 'puzzle person'—you can laugh about your fear of Sudoku together, or peek at the answers. Having fun is as important as exercising the brain!
- If you can't meet in person, you could photocopy a few puzzles and work on them together by phone...worth a try.

## Getting started

- Suggest that you choose and work on a puzzle together.
- Ask your loved one to do the writing or highlighting.
- You could find the first word in a word search, or a crossword box and then hand over. Leave plenty of time for your loved one to find the next word. Patience is the key!
- If they look unsure, do a 'think aloud': "Hmm, so we need a B..."
- Not all activities will suit everyone.
- The Quick Quizzes say, 'Try the quiz yourself or test a friend', so be ready to be the one being tested!
- It's great to finish on a high of success, and a promise of 'next time'.