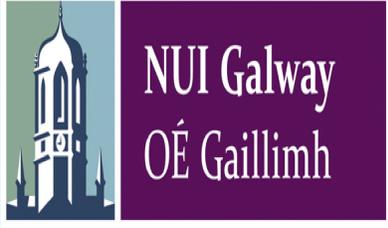




BRIGHT SPARKS



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AIM OF BRIGHT SPARKS

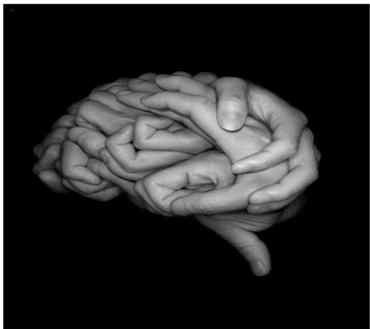
To teach primary school children about neuroscience. 6th class students and their teacher are invited to spend an hour learning about the brain, its structure, functions and abilities.

We hope that learning about brains in this accessible way will spark an interest in science and increase awareness of the importance of a healthy body for a healthy brain.



BRIGHT SPARKS WORKSHOPS

The children are introduced to 'the brain' with a short power point presentation



Then they work through 4 different work stations:

Station 1

Memory span task –The challenge is to be able to repeat the list backwards, then to repeat it alphabetically and neurologically.



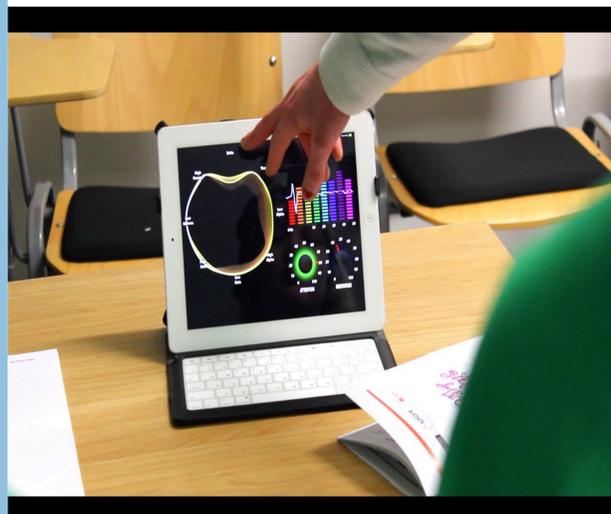
Station 2:

Mirror drawing task: working with procedural memory - demonstrates how difficult it is to draw an image which is not in its usual form. It also shows how the brain can learn to adjust to new information over time and with practice.



Station 3:

Corsi Block Tapping Test: challenges visuo-spatial memory and illustrates the 'visuo-spatial sketchpad' - a part of the brain's right hemisphere which stores information as it looks when we see it. This exercise explains how we remember things which cannot be verbalised.



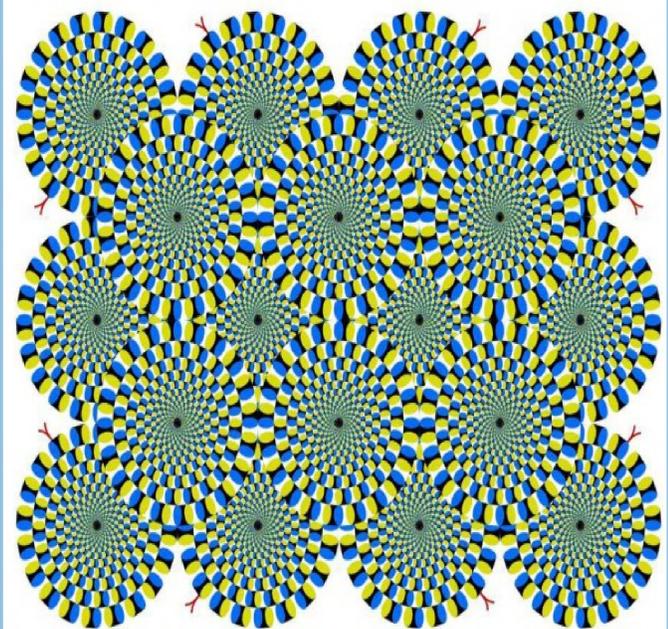
Station 4:

EEG scan is a firm favorite. The children are fitted with a headpiece which detects electrical activity in the brain and presents it on a monitor as brainwaves, introducing them to the different types of brainwaves and the states of consciousness they represent.



EXPLORE

Bright Sparks is assisted and funded by Explore, a joint initiative between the NUI Galway Students' Union and the University. Explore encourages staff and student collaboration on innovative ideas.



LOOK US UP!

Bright Sparks is on Facebook and Twitter. Followers are kept up to date on Bright Sparks sessions and news, and are also treated to brain games such as the Rosarch test and mind-boggling visual illusions. Social media has been pivotal in promoting Bright Sparks as a novel project, informing and raising interest in the initiative.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all the students and schools for taking part and parents for allowing their child to work with us. We also wish to thank Explore for supporting, funding and guiding Bright Sparks.