Cartoon Activity

Older adults who are developing cognitive difficulties often lose the ability to take another person's perspective. The inability to understand how one's actions are affecting others can affect one's ability to socialize and may be a sign of frontal lobe impairment. Theory of mind is a term used by psychologists to refer to this cognitive ability. One approach to enhancing and maintaining cognitive ability is to do activities that require one to take another’s perspective. Here you will find an activity involving matching cartoons with captions (this is often used as a measure of theory of mind).

The cartoon caption activities can be adapted to any level. Choose cartons from: http://www.cartoonbank.com/ or another website. The cartoons you choose must have the caption below the picture and not as part of the cartoon drawing. In the easiest level, give participants 4-8 cartoons that have been separated from their captions. We recommend typing the captions in large font rather than using the caption provided at the bottom of the cartoon.

The activity can be made more difficult by choosing less obvious cartoons and giving participants a greater number (e.g., 10-12). The most challenging cartoon activity would be to give the participants a cartoon without a caption and ask them to create one; this could also be used as a homework assignment.