

Challenges and Strategies

Best Practices:

- Inform all staff involved of established plan.
- Stay the course long enough to determine if strategies are effective (minimum of two weeks).
- Ensure that substitutes are aware of established plan.
- Well-planned lessons with adequate provisioning for all students
- Celebrate each milestone!

Following Simple Directions

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alert student that a direction will be given using visual or verbal cues. • Establish facial or body orientation to speaker. • Give one step, simple directions initially, working up to 2 and 3 steps upon success. (Example: “Listen – get your math packet and turn to page 2.”) • Have directions/visual symbol/picture directions on the board/paper to reinforce the auditory directions. • Embed definitions of any unknown words. (“We will match colors and shapes in the math center. Match means the <i>same</i> color and shape. They look alike.”) • Emphasize key words by adjusting voice, volume and inflection. (For example, “<i>GET</i> your math packet and <i>TURN</i> to page 2.”) • Chunk and repeat directions. (For example, “<i>Packet-page 2. Packet- page 2.</i>”) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Use structured student partnering.</i> • Check frequently for understanding by asking student to paraphrase directions. • Provide an example of finished product. • Model and have students demonstrate an activity step by step. • Practice consistent routines and procedures. • Provide daily task checklist. • Provide frequent, specific and positive feedback. • Provide constructive feedback that prompts improved performance. • |
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Attention

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use physical proximity as you convey information/directions. • Incorporate the student’s name in a question or direction. • Give a physical or verbal prompt (e.g., light touch on the shoulder, tap the student’s desk) to gain attention before conveying information/directions. • Connect curriculum to student interests. • Implement multi-sensory, hands-on instruction. • Adjust length of activities to honor student’s attention span. • Use a timer to delineate the amount of time to work on a task. • Alternate between physical and mental tasks and activities. • Reduce visual and auditory distractions. • Use frequent changes in volume, pitch, inflection along with gestures to maintain attention. • Provide a quiet area to limit over-stimulation in or outside of the classroom. • Place a bright piece of paper behind the task to be worked on. • | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a “visual-window” (i.e. an index card with a cut out square) to focus student’s attention on a portion of the page. • <i>Give verbal and visual/picture cues.</i> • <i>Establish facial or body orientation to speaker.</i> • <i>Redirect/refocus on task.</i> • <i>Give one step directions initially, working up to 2 and 3 steps upon success.</i> • <i>Utilize daily task checklist.</i> • <i>Check frequently for understanding by asking student to paraphrase directions.</i> • <i>Provide example of completed product.</i> • <i>Use structured student partnering.</i> • <i>Repeat directions for students as needed.</i> • <i>Provide consistent routines and procedures.</i> • <i>Provide frequent positive feedback.</i> • |
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Completing Tasks Independently

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give either/or choices: This...or that... (would you rather...) • Prompt student to look at peers for clues about what he/she should be doing. • Use pre-contracting: This...then that... (first do this, then do the preferred task). Use a first-then card. • Keep consistent organizational system (folders, color-coding, baskets, checklists) across teachers. Provide extra work and storage space. • Identify same seating and individual cubby with student's name. • Model specific ways to ask for individual help. • Provide frequent check-ins. Have student state what they will do to complete the task, to ensure that the student understands the task. • List, post, and say all the steps necessary to complete each activity. • | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease the length or intensity of the task. • Provide written directions (if the student can read) or picture cues so that the student can check off each step of the task. • Provide consistent schedules, posted with visual pictures/charts of daily routines. Re-teach and consistently present the routine. Note: individual schedules for some students will be necessary. • Give and go (fading prompts by giving first step of directions, student repeats directions, walk away, return for feedback, praise or correct, and assist with next step). • <i>Give verbal and visual/picture cues.</i> • <i>Provide, frequent, specific and positive feedback.</i> • |
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Behavior:

“Behavior communicates an underlying need”

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish classroom-wide positive behavior system. • Provide either/or choices. • Schedule movement or quiet breaks built into the student's schedule. Break cards can be used for teacher to prompt students. • Ensure that the student understands the expectation and has the prerequisite skills and create individual behavior system to reinforce classroom behavior. • Convey expectations using positive language and directions (e.g. “I like the way Johnny is waiting quietly”). • Model and explicitly teach the behaviors you want to see. • Give immediate, clear feedback to student response. • Establish appropriate and consistent consequences. • | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praise and provide positive reinforcement frequently for compliant behavior. • Use pre-contracting: This...then that... • Provide adequate space between students (personal space). • Use visual and verbal reminders of rules such as rule cards (for example a “carpet rules” card might show ‘look at the teacher’ and ‘listen to others’). • Set simple ground rules for cooperative groups. • Provide social skills training/social stories to teach sharing, making friends, playing on the playground. • Be responsive to culturally diverse students' learning styles and patterns of social interactions. • Provide engaging instruction with high expectations. • |
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Transitions

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give advance notice of transitions and changes in schedule/routine (5 minutes until art, 1 minute until art, time for art.).• State clear expectations for transition behavior and practice with feedback.• Ensure appropriate planning for duration of tasks (amount of time students will need to finish is given so they are not interrupted unnecessarily).• Establish clear methods for transitions (i.e. subdividing where the teacher picks subgroups of students to transition at a time, 'red shirts').• Use transition songs and chants.• Provide transition objects (carry math book to math).• | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set a timer to establish reasonable amount of time needed for transitions.• Develop and follow predictable, consistent routines (morning unpacking, lunch procedure, reading centers).• Use picture schedule for morning routine and end of day procedures.• Establish work baskets or location for unfinished work.• Ensure that each lesson includes time for closure, even if you do not finish all lesson activities. In the closure time, give expectations and structure for transition to the next activity.• |
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