

Special Education Strategies

Headphones

Facilitate the use of headphones for students who would benefit from noise cancellation. Students who can focus with extra stimulus of background noise to help them remain focused.

How to Use

1. Use media center headphones, have students provide them, or purchase some from a dollar store to play music.
2. For sound blocking headphones purchase several pairs from a hardware store, or earplugs when age appropriate children.
3. Encourage students to wear the head phone during individual work time.
4. Encourage students to wear headphones when class or room is noisy or has extra distractions.

When to Use

- When a student is easily distracted and is frequently losing focus.
- When a student has ADHD/ADD.
- When a student is unfocused and inattentive.
- When a student is sensitive to loud sound, noise, or sensitive hearing.
- When a student has an Autism Spectrum Disorder and needs quiet time.

Variations

Extra Assignment Time

Use headphones for students who need extra time for assignments for cancel or provide background noise.

Hallway Headphones

Use for students with hearing or noise sensitivity when transitioning in the hallways.

Physical Education Headphones

Use for students during physical education in the gymnasium for hearing sensitivity.

Break Down Directions

Students who get overwhelmed with too much information and have difficulties breaking up directions can benefit from helping focus students on smaller goals. Break down directions help focus students on specific parts and tasks.

How to Use

1. Re-read directions to the student one part, section, or task at a time.
2. Simplify your language by being very concise and clear.
3. After explaining one part or re-reading one section of directions, show the student and point to what you are talking about.
4. Have the student repeat and explain watch part of the directions back to you and then all the directions after they have all been presented.
5. After explaining the directions fully, do one or several tasks with the student.
6. Allow a break after the student completes a portion of the task.

When to Use

- When a student shows signs of becoming overwhelmed.
- When you are aware of an AHAD/ADD diagnosis either by school or outside school source.
- When student is reluctant to work.
- When a student completes work incorrectly frequently.

Variations

Learning Disabilities

Incorporate the structure when facilitating students with learning or mental disabilities.

English Language Learners

Incorporate English language learners in the structure when giving instructions to tasks.

Major Projects

Incorporate as a procedure for larger projects for the classroom to break down the project into smaller tasks.

Organize Materials Daily

Teach students routine organizational skills to create habits for the completion of daily tasks. Students who demonstrate difficulty with order processes, consistently do not turn in work, or cannot locate necessary material frequently can be empowered by providing an organized structure.

How to Use

1. Instruct students to organize their desks and bags once every day.
2. Provide a standard routine and daily checklist for students.
3. Model the routine and show the students how to complete the daily routine.
4. Provide students with an organizational checklist for the end of the day.

When to Use

- When students have ADHD/ADD.
- When students are on the Autism spectrum.
- Students who consistently are disorganized.
- Students who have difficulty fulfilling daily procedures.
- Students who frequently turn in incomplete work or fail to turn in work frequently.

Variations

Project Checklists

Provided checklists for larger projects with multiple steps.

Instruction Checklist

Provide checklists for classroom activities that require multiple and sequential steps.

Mentally Impaired Checklist

Students that have mental impairment could use a daily checklist to stay on task with classroom work and routines.

English Language Learner Strategies

Stem Sentences

A technique that gives students the opportunity to respond in complete sentences to learn effective communication. Sentence stems provide scaffolding to help students get started in speaking or writing using a sentence formula to model how to correctly respond.

How to Use

1. Create a list of sentence stems that are appropriate to the discussion or task.
2. Structure sentence stems with fill-in the blanks or stems that require the student to complete the sentence.
3. Model for students through examples of how to complete sentences.
4. Practice the sentences in a group writing task.
5. Review by having students share their sentences.

When to Use

- Use sentence stems to facilitate a meaningful conversation.
- Use sentence stems for ELL's that need help launching sentences.
- When responding to a peer discussion.
- When teaching or reinforcing academic language.
- When working through a problem.

Variations

Sentence Stem Roundtables

Provide a list of unfinished sentences to give students. Allow time for students to complete the sentences with information learned in class and discuss at their roundtable.

Sentence Stem Showdowns

Provide sentence stems to be used to review content learned in class through showdown structure.

Sentence Stem Paragraphs

Teach students how to write complete paragraphs using multiple sentence stems. Another option is to provide multiple sentence stems that students can organize into complete paragraphs.

Tell Me Something Good

Devote a portion of class to allow students to share with a partner something good. The exercise provides students an opportunity to practice oral language skills to promote a positive environment, build confidence, and build a sense of classroom community.

How to Use

1. Teach expectations by informing that each “Tell Me Something Good”, the students will share something with other students or teacher something positive from their life.
2. Allow students time to prepare what they will share.
3. Instruct students to share the positive in a complete sentence and not in story form.
4. Instruct students to congratulate each other with a “high five”, “fist bump”, or “thumbs up”.

When to Use

- At the beginning of class.
- On a specific day each week.
- During extra time at the end of class.
- For students needing to develop language skills.
- When students need practice formulating sentences orally.

Variations

Compliment Jar

Place a jar in classroom and have students write a compliment to another person in a complete sentence.

Exit Tickets

Instruct students to write a positive moment from class or their life in a complete sentence to turn in at the end of class.

Tell Me a New Word

Instruct students to share a new word they have learned to read or write. Allow students to share the word and definition.

Turn and Talk

Strategy to engage all students to participate in a classroom discussion, rather than only a few students participating. Give all students an opportunity to share meaningful things in a conversation as they learn language.

How to Use

1. Provide a question or prompt for students to discuss and tell them how much time they have to share.
2. Have students turn to a specific partner. Communicate who their partner is before the activity.
3. Set the timer and have students begin to talk. When the time is up allow the students to share thoughts or ideas from their discussion with their partner.

When to Use

Use any time in a lesson to encourage students to use academic language.

After five minutes of oral or written input to process what they have just learned.

During class discussions as a way to discuss ideas before sharing with class.

As a clarification tool for a complex problem or new guiding question.

As a closing activity so that students can review what was learned in the lesson.

Variations

Eyeball Partners

When students are seated at tables or in groups students share with the person they are facing.

Clock Partners

Using a clock template, have students make appointments with four other classmates for discussion.

Reading Partners

Use the structure to have students practice reading classroom materials by reading in pairs.