

A Blog for Busy Teachers

FREE LANGUAGE-BASED TEACHING STRATEGIES

Supporting Executive Function Through Process Writing

Materials Management:

- General Classroom Routines:
 - Post a “are you ready for class?” checklist of materials that students can use as a visual at the beginning of a class period
 - Show students a model writing workspace (this could be a picture on the wall, or an actual physical model they can look to in the classroom)
 - Develop and maintain a consistent filing system, like a master binder. For digital materials, create a class folder with sub sections that mirror the physical class binder.
 - If possible, utilize cross-curricular materials management strategies (ex: a consistent assignment notebook, consistent binder systems) that carry-over across the academic day
- Prewriting Phase:
 - Directly cue students to store the materials generated in both the brainstorm and organize phase of the writing process in the appropriate section of their class filing system (physical and/or digital). Continue to cue until students develop automaticity in this area.
- Writing Phase:
 - Directly cue students to store materials (rough draft(s), proofreading checklist(s), final draft) in the appropriate section of their class master filing system (physical and/or digital). Continue to cue until students develop automaticity in this area.
 - Develop a “writing portfolio” with students as a way to organize, showcase and reflect upon their written work. If possible, this should be managed by students. Create a twin “teacher portfolio” in which you keep copies of student work for data tracking.



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Time Management:

- General Classroom Routines:
 - Write and actively engage with a class agenda, including each broken down step of the writing process which you plan to address that day.
 - Utilize and directly teach students to use an academic planner in which they can map out tasks for the day, tasks for the week, and tasks for the month.
 - Incorporate routines that help students to “see” and “feel” time. For example, you might time an activity and cue students when they’ve reached the midpoint. Walk students through the self-questioning they might engage in to evaluate their own progress. When engaging in a timed activity, shade in a paired portion of an analog clock. For digital time-tracking, try Sarah Ward’s Chrome extension: [Thinking Time Tracker](#).
 - Incorporate strategies which task students to envision their final product, then break down the steps they need to take in order to achieve that goal. Incorporate metacognitive questioning into the task: What mindset will you need to have in order to do it? What obstacles might get in your way? How will you feel when you are done?
- Prewriting Phase:
 - At the beginning of the writing process, use a physical calendar to map out each step of the writing process. Use pencil, rather than pen, to allow for future adjustments. Engage students to predict how long they think each step will take.
- Writing Phase:
 - Incorporate regular check-ins with students to see whether their plan is “going to plan.” Do they need to go back to their calendar and adjust the due dates? Which step is taking the longest amount of time? Did this surprise them? These conversations will help students develop a more accurate internal clock.



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Language and Information Management:

- General Classroom Routines:
 - Develop consistent expectations for language-management within the classroom. Students should expect that all assignments will be paired with a set of corresponding visual supports; depending on the needs of your students, these supports can be optional, required, or differentiated according to student need.
- Prewriting Phase:
 - Set clear requirements for the number of initial brainstormed ideas. For example, you might ask students to come up with 5 ideas for a single-paragraph assignment, then task students with narrowing down to three.
 - At the “organize” step, provide students with graphic organizers and templates that correspond to the content requirements of the writing task. Students should be part of the conversation about which tools work best for them, and when appropriate, encouraged to create their own organizers.
- Writing Phase:
 - Provide a visual to cue students on the correct “shape” of a single paragraph, multi-paragraph composition, or essay. Clearly indicate where students should place elements such as indents and transitional words and phrases.
 - When needed, provide specific writing templates that incorporate visual cues for required composition elements (ex: topic sentence, details, etc.).
 - Provide a model of what a finished final draft should look like, and what elements students need to pass in with the final draft. Are you requiring specific formatting (ex: MLA, APA)? Include a visual to show students how their writing should look.

