



Ensure Automatization through Practice and Review

AUTOMATIC SKILLS FACILITATE SUCCESS

In addition to specific automatic skills such as reading or solving equations, students need automatic routines to move through their day. Whether it's coming into the classroom and getting ready to learn, taking notes, or starting a research project, good routines facilitate students' success. Explicit teaching and modeling, and consistent correct practice will ensure automaticity.

Follow the steps below to ensure your students develop automatic routines that will help them succeed in class.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE ROUTINE YOU'D LIKE AND THE STEPS INVOLVED IN PERFORMING IT.

Example: Students start the class period ready to learn.

| WHAT MY STUDENTS MUST DO | WHAT I MUST DO |
|--|---|
| Bring materials to class. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the materials students always need. Develop a checklist of materials to track preparedness. |
| Enter the room and be seated immediately. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider assigning seats. Verbalize, review, and enforce clear expectations for transition into class. |
| Hand in completed homework on time. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect homework at the same time each day. Identify a consistent place where students should put completed work. Keep a list of missing or incomplete work and speak after class with students who owe it. |
| Record homework in their assignment books. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post the homework on the board in the same place every day. Give students credit for recording their homework. |
| Have correct pages or handout in front of them when working. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post an agenda for the day's class (what topics will be covered), and write the page # or handout required for beginning class. Provide visual cues by showing them what the handout or page looks like. |
| Open the notebook to a fresh page for notes and/or work and write the heading. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach students to start every new page of notes with a standard heading (e.g., name, date, academic subject, notes topic). Provide visual cues by modeling this expectation on the board or a poster. |
| Practice this routine daily. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign peer feedback partners. Create an incentive for students to follow this routine. |



STEP 2: MODEL AND EXPLICITLY TEACH EACH STEP.

Example: Show students what “ready to learn” looks like by explaining and practicing each element of the routine.

STEP 3: REQUIRE STUDENTS TO PRACTICE THE ROUTINE WHILE YOU OBSERVE AND CUE AS NEEDED.

Example: Keep a checklist for each element of the routine while you are teaching it, and check off when students have done it properly. Remember to compliment those who are successful, and provide additional instruction or reminders to those who need it.

STEP 4: REQUIRE STUDENTS TO PRACTICE THE ROUTINE AND CUE EACH OTHER AS NEEDED.

Example: When students have demonstrated they can implement the routine while you are watching and providing feedback, tell them that they’ll now need to do it themselves with feedback from an assigned partner.

STEP 5: WHEN STUDENTS CAN PERFORM THE ROUTINE AUTOMATICALLY, ASSESS THEIR INDEPENDENCE.

Example: Grade each student on his or her independent implementation. A simple 1-2-3 model can work well.

1 = meet the teacher for further guidance

2 = you’re almost there – keep practicing identify specific skill

3 = terrific – keep doing what you’re doing

STEP 6: BUILD IN REPETITIVE PRACTICE OF THE ROUTINE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. CONSIDER ADDING TO IT.

Example: When the “ready-to-learn” routine is automatic, and students can generalize it to other appropriate settings, consider adding to it a higher level skill such as “ready-to-question” or “ready-to-summarize.” Teach students to prepare a question about the class topic or a short summary of the previous day’s lesson as an additional step in their ready-to-learn routine. Follow steps 1-6 to make this additional step part of the automatic routine.

It takes 6 – 8 weeks of practice to learn a new habit!