



# SPOTLIGHT

ON LANGUAGE-BASED TEACHING



Landmark Teaching Principle™ #6

## Include Student in Learning Process

### EXECUTIVE FUNCTION INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORTS

Unfortunately, when it comes to executive function, there is not one method of providing interventions and supports. There is a plethora of resources and ideas surrounding this issue describing how to work with students to improve their skills. In this attachment, we will explore sample questionnaires for both students and teachers, as well as strategies for teachers to employ in the classroom and when working with students.

#### Questionnaires

The implementation of questionnaires can have many benefits and provide classroom teachers with important insights into their students' skills. If students complete self-questionnaires at the beginning of the school year, the classroom teacher can be provided with knowledge about their strengths, weakness, interests, and needs. This type of information can be extremely useful when thinking about the classroom environment and designing lesson plans and units.

In addition, questionnaires can be used as a basis for reviewing the students' results with them and using the information to help guide them to form individual goals for specific quarters or the whole school year. This procedure helps the students to hone in on skills they need to practice or address, and it provides the students with a focus for skill development.

Lastly, teachers can use questionnaires to compare their own information with self-reflections provided by their students. If both the teacher and the student fill out a questionnaire concerning the student, a comparison and discussion around those results can be both enlightening and informative. Useful discussions can be formed around the similarities or disparities in the assessments, allowing for the development of strategies to improve student results and/or providing more cohesion.

For sample questionnaires, please click the following links:

Executive Function [Questionnaire for Young Students](#)

Executive Function [Questionnaire for Older Students](#)

For the full array of questionnaires, please check out Patricia W. Newhall's text [Language-Based Learning Series: Executive Function: Foundations for Learning and Teaching.](#)



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## Classroom Strategies and Supports

Beyond questionnaires, there are several strategies and supports that teachers can employ in the classroom to boost students' effectiveness with executive function skills.

### Self-Awareness Building

Use reflective tools, including questionnaires, goal-setting, and journals. Using questionnaires allows students to reflect on specific skills and their development with that skill. Creating goals based on strengths and weaknesses and areas for improvement gives the students something tangible to work toward, but also allows for productive conversations around progress toward meeting those goals.

### Planning

Have students complete step-by-step plans for each assignment. Throughout the process, have students reflect on their progress toward the end result. Discuss with the student what went wrong, what went well, and what can be changed to reach a better outcome.

### Managing Focus

Include multi-sensory teaching strategies that actively engage the students in the lesson. The more hands-on the lessons can be, the better the students will focus.

### Managing Materials

Create a system for managing classroom materials and stick with it. Model that system for the students and take the time to ensure that each student has set up a similar system with which s/he can follow through. Once those systems are in place, provide the students with direct instruction around keeping those materials organized. When handing out paper, label it specifically and tell the students where to put it. Allow time to ensure they have each followed the instructions. As time progresses, start scaling back the support and the students will hopefully follow the method independently.

### Managing Time

Practice having students estimate the amount of time a given task will take. Once the students have finished that task, have them reflect on their estimation versus reality and how to make those numbers equal.



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### Managing Language

Provide note-taking templates and structures for outlining written compositions, so that students know exactly what information they are looking for.

### Managing Emotion

Consider exploring simple meditation tactics to reduce stress and manage emotions before beginning lessons.

### Managing Effort

Have students reflect on their behavior and effort. Use this reflection to drive conversations around where the student is doing well and how s/he could improve. This could be done within the class daily or even weekly.

### Self-Advocating

Provide students with structured supports, including scripting, to show them how to communicate appropriately by giving them the correct language. Brainstorm this process together and supply insight to why or how certain ways of communicating may be more efficient.

## HOW IS THIS INCLUDING STUDENTS IN THE LEARNING PROCESS?

By including the students in these discussions, the classroom teacher can explain how various interventions and supports are designed to assist them in specific skill development. This discussion provides the students with more of an understanding as to their own learning and needs and also builds their ownership of their own skill improvement.