

3. REACHING IN

IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES

ATTENTION, FOCUSING, AND CHALLENGES

STAYING ON TASK: CHARACTERISTICS

Student _____ Teacher _____

Date _____ Grade _____

Fails to give close attention to details	<input type="checkbox"/>
Makes careless mistakes in schoolwork or other activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has difficulty organizing tasks and activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish schoolwork or chores	<input type="checkbox"/>
Avoids, dislikes, or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loses things necessary for tasks or activities (e.g., assignments, pencils, books, or tools)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distracted by extraneous stimuli	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is forgetful in completing daily activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rushes through assignment with no regard to accuracy or quality of work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Begins assignments before receiving directions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is easily distracted by auditory and visual stimuli	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does not turn in homework assignments	<input type="checkbox"/>
Frequently does not complete in-class assignments	<input type="checkbox"/>
Frequently unable to follow written/oral directions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has little or no interaction with others	<input type="checkbox"/>
Requires eye contact in order to listen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Frequently is disorganized	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does not remain on task (daydreams)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has limited memory skills	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often fails to generalize knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>
Frequently fails screening tools or quizzes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leaves seat in classroom or in other situations in which seating is expected	<input type="checkbox"/>
Runs about or climbs excessively in situations where it is inappropriate	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Has difficulty playing or engaging in leisure activities quietly	
Frequently on the go or acts as if “driven by a motor”	
Talks excessively	
Blurts out answers before questions have been completed	
Has difficulty awaiting turn	
Makes unnecessary physical contact	
Interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g., in conversations or games)	
Appears to be socially immature	
Bothers other students who are trying to work, listen, etc.	
Makes inappropriate comments or unnecessary noises in the classroom	
Tends to overreact to situations	
Frequently does not work independently	
Often not accepted by others	
Frequently has no concept of time	
Frequently does not keep track of assignments	
Does not respond appropriately to environmental/social cues	
Is easily angered, annoyed, or upset	
Has coordination difficulty—falls, trips, etc.	
Has difficulty retrieving information	
Often shifts from one activity to another	

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ATTENTION, FOCUSING, AND CHALLENGES STAYING ON TASK: INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES AND INTERVENTIONS

Student _____ Teacher _____

Date _____ Grade _____

REDUCE DISTRACTIONS	Tried/ Duration	Effective Y/N	Remarks
Use study carrels			
Check lighting and noise levels			
Remove unnecessary materials from student desk			
Position student out of classroom traffic flow			
Seat student next to supportive peers and away from distractions			

IMPROVE FOCUS

Ask the student occasionally what time it is or what subject s/he has next			
Stand by his/her desk as often as possible when talking to the class			
Stay close to the student in large areas of confusing situations (e.g., fire drills, assemblies)			
Set up a system of inconspicuous, prearranged signals to help the student			
Teach student to self-evaluate targeted behavior using tally marks or checklists			
Provide student with a written checklist of expectations—only essential concepts			
Establish eye contact; touch shoulder, use name and proximity when giving instructions			
Give one part of a sequence of tasks at a time			
Use hands-on materials and manipulatives			
Have the student retell instructions to ensure understanding			
Underline key words and use colored paper for markers in reading			
Teach self-talk skills (i.e., “I will try” and “I can walk down the hall quietly”)			
Teach students to visualize and describe appropriate behavior			

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Be animated, theatrical, and responsive			
Intersperse low with high interest tasks			
Use background music—it helps to block out other noise			
Block or chunk assignments into time or productive segments—have child work in six five-minute segments instead of one 30-minute segment			
Alter assignments			
+Alter course expectations			

PROVIDE POSITIVE MOVEMENT

Send student on an errand before s/he has reached frustration point			
Allow student to work in various positions—standing, sitting, kneeling, etc.			
Allow student to have an object to manipulate (i.e., stress ball)			
Provide movement between activities			
Provide breaks and opportunities for controlled movement (e.g., sharpening pencils and running errands)			

PROVIDE STRUCTURE

Encourage independence/self-management			
Use rewards and contracts to teach and enforce on-task behavior			
Frequently review posted class rules and routines			
Prepare students for approaching transitions			
Plan ahead—teacher organization and preparation facilitate student success			
Keep directions simple and clear			
Establish a routine			
Give parents a set of books for home use			
Use clear, simple language, and repeat instructions frequently			
Be consistent with routine (structure) and consequences			
Define expectations in advance			
Offer limited choices of materials and/or activities			
Allow cursive handwriting or printing			

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Extend time limits			
Anticipate problems—be proactive			
Give leadership roles			
Set up a buddy system			
Use small groups and cooperative learning			
Use contracts			
Provide the student with strategies for learning and organization			
Encourage goal setting and mastering challenges (daily, monthly, etc.)			
Teach students to “DeBug,” see appendix			

CULTIVATE A POSITIVE MINDSET

Empower students to use down time as needed			
Seek student input to resolve problematic behaviors			
Be aware of student allergies			
Don't punish by excluding student from preferred and/or movement activities			
Communicate unconditional acceptance			
Focus on student's abilities rather than disabilities			
Give genuine praise and emphasize the positive			
Provide immediate and frequent feedback			
Stay flexible			
Ignore minor behaviors and attend to positive behaviors			
Stay calm			
Practice forgiveness			
Have a back-up plan to relieve teacher stress			

+ Modification