

News Notes

A Newsletter for Teachers of Students with Significant
Cognitive Disabilities
Educational Equity for All



January 2017

Transition Skills

Transition skills involve “shifting gears” from environment to environment, or from task to task. The observable behaviour involves switching from one place or one activity to another, with minimal fuss. The cognitive tasks required to make easy transitions are significant. They include: flexible problem-solving to change one’s mind set; changing focus from one activity; and adapting emotionally to change.

INSTRUCTIONAL

- Use a visual schedule and timer for daily transitions.
- Provide advance notice of changes.
- Teach calming strategies.
- Use photos of new places.
- Visit the website of fieldtrip locations to familiarize the student with it ahead of time.
- Visit new environments many times ahead of the change.
- Use a calendar or agenda to plan for changes.
- Use social stories.
- Have familiar staff accompany the student in new environments.
- Take familiar items to new situations.
- Use preferential seating to position the student in a predictable location.
- Use a visual schedule.
- Provide calming tools (stress ball, sensory activity, etc.).

ASSESSMENT

- Provide advance notice of tests/assignments.
- Provide additional time.
- Provide a familiar alternative location.
- Provide a choice of assessments.
- Chunk assignments/test questions.
- Reduce the number of questions.
- Provide breaks.

<https://goo.gl/7XIXJI>



The best, free
Interactive
Whiteboard
Resources

The resources are organised by subject, age group and category to make them easy for you to find. We are constantly updating the web sites listed here to ensure that they are current.

<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/Interactive.aspx>



Keep students engaged

If your students are bored and learning isn’t fun in your classroom you will quickly encounter behaviors and lack of student progress. In order to stay sane, it is imperative that you keep students engaged by focusing on creating lessons that are inventive, creative, and hands-on. Of course this won’t happen for every lesson you teach every day but you can certainly create an environment that is warm and engaging for all learners.

If your students start to get bored or restless, take a movement break (there are great options on youtube – my current favorite is [jammin’ minute](#)). Allow for comfortable reading chairs, [fidgets](#), gum, etc. Find a way to meet the needs of all learners through kinesthetic activities, visual stimulation, auditory expression, or tactile centers.

20 Brain Break Clips: Fight the Fidgeting!

<https://goo.gl/MCZojk>



EDUCATIONAL
EQUITY FOR ALL
..... Giving kids what they need to succeed.

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FEATURED IDEA OF THE MONTH



Don't Be An ANGRY BIRD: Lessons on Anger Management for Kids
<https://goo.gl/t0lw5f>



We network for education

- PreK-12 Educator Resources
K-12 Core Lesson Plans Library
<http://www.uen.org/k12educator/corelessonplans.shtml>
Lessons are arranged by Core, CTE, and Grade Level.

Early Childhood (PreK)	Educational Technology (2-5 6-8 9-12)	English Language Arts (K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12)
Financial Literacy (11-12)	Fine Arts (K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12)	Health Education (8 9 10 11 12)
K-2 Integrated Core (K 1 2)	Library Media (K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12)	Mathematics (K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12)
Physical Education (K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12)	Science (K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12)	Social Studies (Indian Education) (K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12)
World Languages (K-12)	English Language Proficiency (PreK/1-2 3-5 6-8 9-12)	

eMedia <http://www.uen.org/emedial/>

- General Learner
K-2 Educator Resources
<http://www.uen.org/k-2educator/>
Student Interactives
<http://www.uen.org/k12student/interactives.shtml>
PBS LearningMedia
<http://utah.pbslearningmedia.org/>

Serving
Pink Lemonade



Magnet Board
Stories/Songs/Activities
This is a great blog called "Serving Pink Lemonade". She has great printable stories and songs that are free. She gives you all the links to find and print favorite stories.
<https://goo.gl/MvDtnr>

ALTERNATIVE AND AUGMENTATIVE COMMUNICATION

Myths and Misconceptions You've heard about PECS, but do you really know what it is? The Myths and Misconceptions surrounding the Picture Exchange Communication System™ (PECS)
<http://www.pecsusa.com/Brochures/MythsandMisconceptions2010.pdf>

WEBSITES AND RESOURCES

<https://goo.gl/GF6hxm>
<https://goo.gl/tpWQZ5>
<https://goo.gl/pz82Gb>

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



TeachersFirst's Professional Resources

TeachersFirst's Professional Resources include everything you need to save time and be a better teacher. Included are strategies for

- **differentiating**
- **must-know professional topics** like cyberbullying and copyright
- help for **newbie or substitute teachers**
- quick access to important **outside sources**
- **reading resources** and ideas for all grades
- **rubrics, tech tips and best practices**
- **timesavers and handy tools**
- and ideas for **working together with parents**

Timesaving **bulletin board hang-ups**, curriculum-connected reading lists, and tutorials on using wikis and blogs in the classroom are just a click away, all written by real teachers like you. You can also access **OK2Ask®**, TeachersFirst's free, online "snack sessions" for teacher self-directed professional development.

<http://www.teachersfirst.com/professional-resources/>

Ten-step survival guide for special-ed teachers (that works for every educator)

1. Remember, it'll all still be there in the morning.
2. It's not personal.
3. Talk to colleagues.
4. Ask for help.
5. Go to bed.
6. Take a walk.
7. Take time for yourself.
8. Pack and eat a good lunch.
9. Meditate/Pray/Relax.
10. What doesn't get done doesn't get done.
<https://goo.gl/ojByfl>