

ETLP 7: Activity Sequencing and Choice

Staff Mini Module



MU Center for SW-PBS
College of Education
University of Missouri




Session Outcomes

At the end of the session, you will be able to...

- Discuss and plan for using Activity Sequencing in the classroom including:
 - Task Interspersion
 - Behavior Momentum
- Discuss and plan for using Student Choice in the classroom.

Effective Classroom Practices

1. Classroom Expectations
 2. Classroom Procedures & Routines
 3. Encouraging Expected Behavior
 4. Discouraging Inappropriate Behavior
 5. Active Supervision
 6. Opportunities to Respond
 7. **Activity Sequencing & Offering Choice**
 8. Task Difficulty
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Activity Sequencing & Choice



For students who *can do* the work but don't, activity sequencing and choice strategies may be helpful.



Activity Sequencing & Offering Choices

- Increases student engagement with learning and task completion.
- Decreases disruptive behavior.
- Improves student perceptions of assignments previously considered too difficult.
- Helps build positive adult-student relationships

Activity Sequencing

Intentionally planning instructional tasks, activities, or requests to promote learning and encourage expected behavior



Activity Sequencing

Sequencing content to promote learning and encourage expected behavior.

Two strategies:

- *Task Interspersal*—Intermingle easier tasks among longer or more difficult tasks.
- *Behavior Momentum*—Using simple instructions to precede more difficult instructions.

Task Interspersal

Word Sort

-ad -am -at

Write 5 words for each

-ad -am -at

Read your list to a partner

-ad -am -at

Definition

- A simple strategy of interspersing tasks that have already been mastered with new and/or more challenging material

Task Interspersal



Emily



Guideline for Using Task Interspersal

- An item must be truly at mastery level before using for interspersing.
- Students prefer assignments when up to 30% of items are new.
- Intersperse in a ratio of 1:3; one mastered to every three new items.
- Slowly fade the mastered items as fluency builds with new content.
- Eventually eliminate the already mastered items.

Logan and Skinner (1998)

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Behavioral Momentum

Word Sort

-ad -am -at

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Write 5 words for each

-ad -am -at

Definition

- Using the momentum of easier tasks or requests to build energy or motion to complete requests or activities of greater difficulty.

Michael



Behavior Momentum

- Identify behaviors that have a high probability of completion.
- Then precede more difficult requests with three or more requests the student can readily do.
- After successful completion, reinforce the student.
- Then present the task that is known to have a lower probability of being completed.
- Again, reinforce the student.
- Gradually reduce the number of easier requests.

Offering Choice

Intentionally planning for providing options to students such as method of response, tools and supplies, working independently or with peers, order of tasks, location for working, etc.



Student Choice



Student Choice

- Type of activity or mode of the task (e.g., written, oral, project, etc.).
- Materials used to complete an assignment.
- Order or sequence in which tasks are completed.
- How the work will be done or with whom to work (e.g., work in a group, pairs, individually).
- Where to work.
- What to do when task is done.

Mr. Franklin Offers Choice

Mr. Franklin knows that his students enjoy project-based activities that relate to their everyday lives. He also knows of students who love using technology rather than paper and pencil tasks. He considers his resources (e.g., available computers, physical space, staff and time) and develops his plan carefully.

When presenting the new unit on recycling, Mr. Franklin offers students a choice of two activities: 1) develop a recycling survey or 2) plan a recycling program. He has students vote on what activity they want to pursue that day. Students then divide into two groups according to their choice.

Mr. Franklin Offers Choice - Continued

Mr. Franklin allows group one to develop a recycling plan for either their classroom or neighborhood; group two could develop their own survey questions or browse the internet to search for other surveys to use as an example. He further allows students to select whether they prefer to work in their group, pairs, or individually. After these decisions are made, Mr. Franklin guides them to choose if they want to handwrite the survey or recycling plan or prepare it on the computer.

When the work is complete and shared, Mr. Franklin asks students to write on a piece of paper what parts of the lesson they enjoyed most and why. He plans to use the feedback for future lesson planning.

(Adapted from Kern & State, 2009)

Steps for Using Choice in the Classroom

1. Create a menu of choices you could provide to students.
2. Look through your choice menu before planning each lesson.
3. Decide what types of choice are appropriate and where they fit best in the lesson.
4. Provide choices as planned while teaching the lesson.
5. Solicit student feedback and input.

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