

Three Quick and Easy Intervention Strategies to Help Motivate Your Students

Adapted from Effective Teacher Training taught at
The Jordan Family Education Center

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1: Chunking

Some students may become overwhelmed with an assignment and give up before they ever begin. A good strategy to help these students to complete their work is called **Chunking**:

- ❖ With chunking, you only give the student a part of the assignment at a time to make it appear to be less work.

Examples:

1. **For a student who is having trouble starting a math worksheet, cover up all but one line of the worksheet. Then tell the student to complete that line. Once the line is completed, uncover the next line etc.**
2. **If you have an in depth assignment, only give the student one part at a time.** (Ex: Report: Each of these is given for the student to do one part at a time: 1. Find five references 2. Summarize each reference 3. Draw up an outline 4. Introduction, 5. Main points 6. Summary etc.)

2: Beat the Clock

(Terry Illes, PhD)

This is a great intervention to use for those students who need motivation to complete even a few problems or produce even a few sentences.

Step 1: Provide the student with the I Beat the Clock Worksheet.

The worksheet is divided into two columns. One side is for keeping track of the number of times the student “beat the clock”. The other side is for keeping track of times the student did not “beat the clock”.

Step 2: Determine the length of each work session.

Step 3: Together with the student, decide exactly how much work he or she must complete within the time period in order to fill in a square on the “I beat the clock” side.

❖ Examples:

- A specific number of problems
- A specific number of lines

Step 4: Explain to the student that if they complete the goal within the allotted time, they will get to fill in a square on the “I beat the clock” side. If they don’t, they fill in a square on the “I didn’t beat the clock” side.

Step 5: Together with the student, determine the number of timings that there will be each day and to what number on the “I beat the clock” side the student must reach in order to obtain a reward.

❖ Hint: Start out small. You really want the student to beat the clock and earn the reward the first couple of times that you run the program.

Step 6: Together with the student, determine the reward that they will earn for reaching the goal.

Step 7: Place a timer (Time Timer, digital timer, egg timer) where the student can see it and start the timing.

Step 8: If the student meets his or her goal within the time limit, place a mark on the first square under “I beat the clock”.

Step 9: Repeat timings throughout the assignment and or the school day. Each time a student reaches his or her goal, fill the next space. Make sure there are enough timings for the student to be able to reach the goal (i.e. a few more timings than the goal number).

Step 10: When the student reaches his or her goal square, make sure to provide the reinforcement.

Step 11: Slowly increase the requirement for the amount of work that needs to be completed as the student becomes good at reaching his or her goals.



I BEAT THE CLOCK



I DIDN'T BEAT THE CLOCK

10	10
9	9
8	8
7	7
6	6
5	5
4	4
3	3
2	2
1	1

TODAY'S GOAL: BEAT THE CLOCK _____ TIMES.

REWARD:

1. IF I HAVE MEET TODAY'S GOAL, I WILL EARN _____.

2. IF I MEET MY GOAL ALL WEEK, I WILL EARN _____.

3: Dots for Motivation

Bowen, Jenson, & Clark, 2004

Dots for Motivation is a super effective program for increasing work completion in any subject. It can be used as a class-wide program or with an individual student.

Materials needed: Envelopes and colored dot stickers

Step 1: The teacher cuts out individual dots but leaves the backing in place.

Step 2: Students are given an envelope where the dots will be stored.

Step 3: Teach your students that they can earn dots when they are on-task, working, or following other designated classroom rules.

Ways a teacher can choose to give out dots:

- During independent work time, walk around the classroom and give out dots to students that are following the classroom rules and working on their assignment.
- You may choose to give a dot each time a target student completes a certain number of problems (Example: one dot for every 4 problems completed).
- You may choose to give a dot to students who complete an entire worksheet.

Step 4: Students place earned dots in their envelope. While working on their assignment, if they come across a problem or an item that they don't want to complete, it can be skipped by sticking a dot next to it.

Step 5: It is important for your students not to have to wait too long for a dot. Use their current rates of work completion in order to determine an appropriate ratio of dot to items completed. As students increase their rates of completion, you can increase the requirements for a dot.

Bowen, J., Jenson, W.R., & Clark, E. (2004). School based interventions for students with behavior problems. New York, NY: Springer.