

ON TASK TRAINING

Lesson 1 Introduce “The Plan”

The Plan – to teach children to direct attention and remain on-task

THE PLAN

Step 1. What must I do? What is the task?

Step 2. Am I on task?

Step 3. Ignore others

Step 4 Stick to and complete the task

Explain the purpose of having a plan – a strategy for staying in control

- Have Step 1 “What must I do?” or “What is the task?” written on a sheet for all to see
- Introduce Step 1 and discuss how we find out what we need to know
- Review good listening strategies using a T chart

GOOD LISTENING	
LOOKS LIKE	SOUNDS LIKE
eyes on the speaker	quiet

- While the children are still seated as a group explain that you will be selecting children to carry out a variety of tasks and everyone will be checking to see if they can demonstrate Step 1
- Give directions for a task e.g. In a moment I’ll point to someone and when I do that person’s task will be to: 1] walk to the front of the room, 2] collect a board duster, 3] put it on the third desk in the front row, and 4] hop back and sit down quietly.
- Following this select a child and ask “What is the task?” After repeating instructions the child carries out the task. Have the class give applause for task completion.
- Repeat this process a few times and include fun components in the tasks given.
- Have the class return to their desks. Once again give task instructions and select a child to repeat these. Have the class complete the task
- Repeat for a variety of tasks and give specific feedback to children regarding their listening and on task behaviours

On Task Training

Lesson 2 Continue “The Plan”

{Children should demonstrate mastery of Step 1 before moving onto Step 2}

REVISE	• Step 1	What must I do?
	• Signs of good listening	
INTRODUCE	• Step 2	Am I on task?

Have Step 2 “Am I on task?” written on a sheet for all to see

- Discuss good working behaviour using a T chart – discuss differences between individual work on task behaviours and partner or group work on task behaviours

GOOD WORKING BEHAVIOUR	
LOOKS LIKE	SOUNDS LIKE
eyes on work materials	quiet voices

Follow a process similar to that used for teaching Step 1.

- Give a direction / task instruction
- Select children at random to repeat instructions to see if they can demonstrate Step 1 “What must I do?” or “What is the task?”
- Have children complete the task – include fun components (e.g. dot-to-dot activities for individual work, or brainstorming or drawing for partner activities)
- Notice and reinforce on-task behaviours – providing specific feedback
- Repeat with a variety of tasks that take longer periods of time to complete.
- Include tasks that involve both quiet, individual work as well as tasks that involve working cooperatively with a partner or small group

On Task Training

Lesson 3 Continue “The Plan”

{Children should demonstrate mastery of Steps 1 & 2 before moving onto Step 3}

REVISE	• Step 1& 2	What must I do? Am I on task?
	• Signs of good listening	
	• Signs of good working behaviour	
INTRODUCE	• Step 3	Ignore distractions

Have Step 3 “Ignore distractions” written on a sheet for all to see

- Discuss what a distraction is and brainstorm distractions that occur in class
- Discuss things children can do (eg. not looking) and can say to themselves (eg. “I won’t take any notice”), as well as to the those trying to distract them (eg. “Please go away”) and make a list of these
- Select children to demonstrate distracting others / ignoring distractions using role plays
- Using role plays also have children demonstrate how to give a clear, assertive message to someone who is pestering them, then turn away and ignore the distraction.
- Set children tasks to complete (reminding them of Steps 1 & 2). Once again include fun components in these tasks and choose tasks that take at least a few minutes to complete.
- Select a few children whose job is to attempt to distract those who are working by speaking to them quietly, asking to borrow things, bumping their desk etc.
- Observe and comment on children who successfully ignore these distractions or quietly and assertively tell the children distracting them to go away.
- **NB** *This session may require two lessons before children successfully ignore distractions or assertively and appropriately tell distractors to leave them alone.*

On Task Training

Lesson 4 Finish “The Plan”

{Children should demonstrate mastery of Steps 1, 2 & 3 before moving onto Step 4}

REVISE

- Step 1, 2 & 3 **What is the task?**
Am I on task?
Ignore distractions
- **Signs of good listening**
- **Signs of good working behaviour**
- **Ways of ignoring distractions**

INTRODUCE

- Step 4 **Stick to and complete the task**

Have the entire Plan written up on a chart for all to see

- Discuss what it means to stick to and complete a task
- Discuss things children can do and can say to themselves to encourage them to complete tasks well, and make a list of these
- Discuss strategies that children can use to ensure they have completed tasks properly (e.g. checking their work for errors)
- Set children tasks to complete (reminding them of Steps 1, 2 & 3). Once again include fun components and choose tasks that take a longer time to complete and require concentration and effort.
- Include both individual tasks and work with a partner or small group.
- Select a few children whose job is to attempt to distract those who are working by speaking to them quietly, asking to borrow things, bumping their desk etc.
- Observe and comment on children who successfully ignore these distractions or quietly and assertively tell the children distracting them to go away and stick to and complete their tasks.

(ideas adapted from “Talk Sense to Yourself” by Jeffrey Wragg)