The Research Literature: Time Management

In summarizing the findings from the research design to identify the characteristics of effective math teachers, Brophy (1986) made the following observation:

> . . . student achievement is maximized when teachers allocate most classroom time to activities designed to promote student achievement and use managerial and instructional strategies that support such achievement [p. 3].

Without a doubt, the effective teacher ensures that students are appropriately engaged in instruction for as much of the available time as possible. Time is important. This is a consistent theme throughout the research, regardless of whether the findings are from studies comparing effective and ineffective teachers in the United States or from studies comparing the effectiveness of instruction in basic skills across different countries.

The "Active-direct" Teacher: Time Management

Teachers' approach to the use of time is often tied to their assessment of a teacher's relative value in the classroom. If teachers feel that the time they spend with students has considerable value, they will work to increase the amount of time spent interacting with students.

The research on the characteristics of effective teachers has yielded a consistent profile of a teacher actively teaching, rather than depending on less direct approaches in which there is less instructional activity and less teacher contact with students. Brophy (1986), in reviewing the research on effective math instruction, reported that "Students achieve more in classes where they spend most of their time being taught or supervised by their teacher rather than working on their own or not working at all" (p. 4).

Borg (1980), in his summary of the research on the relationship between time and school learning, noted a consistent finding: "The amount of time that students are engaged in relevant reading and mathematics tasks is positively associated with academic achievement" (p. 59).

One of the major implications of the research on the effective use of time lies in the extent to which an individual teacher can manage the use of time. The research shows considerable variability among teachers teaching the same content at the same grade levels. Rosenshine (1980) noted that the teachers who were more successful at engaging students had their students engaged for two hours and thirty minutes per day, or 53 percent of the in-class time. The least successful teachers had students engaged for one hour and twenty minutes per day, or 28 percent of the in-class time. Berliner (1984) reported that some teachers generate very high engagement rates. He summed up the importance of student engagement with instruction tasks as follows:

> The fact that engaged time is so variable across classes is what is now well documented. There are classes where engagement rates are regularly under 50 percent, and those where engagement rates are regularly about 90 percent. One hour of allocated mathematics instruction, then, can result in either 30 minutes or 54 minutes of actual delivered instruction to students. In a single week, differences of such a magnitude can yield a difference of about two hours in the amount of mathematics that is actually engaged in by students. It is no wonder that in reading, mathematics, or science, at any grade level, large variations in engaged time by students is a strong predictor of achievement [p. 57].

Time Management Concepts

Research on the effective use of time has generated several time management terms. The most common term is time-on-task, or engaged time. Other terms include available time, allocated time, academic learning time (or ALT), pacing, transition time, and instructional momentum. (See Figure1.)

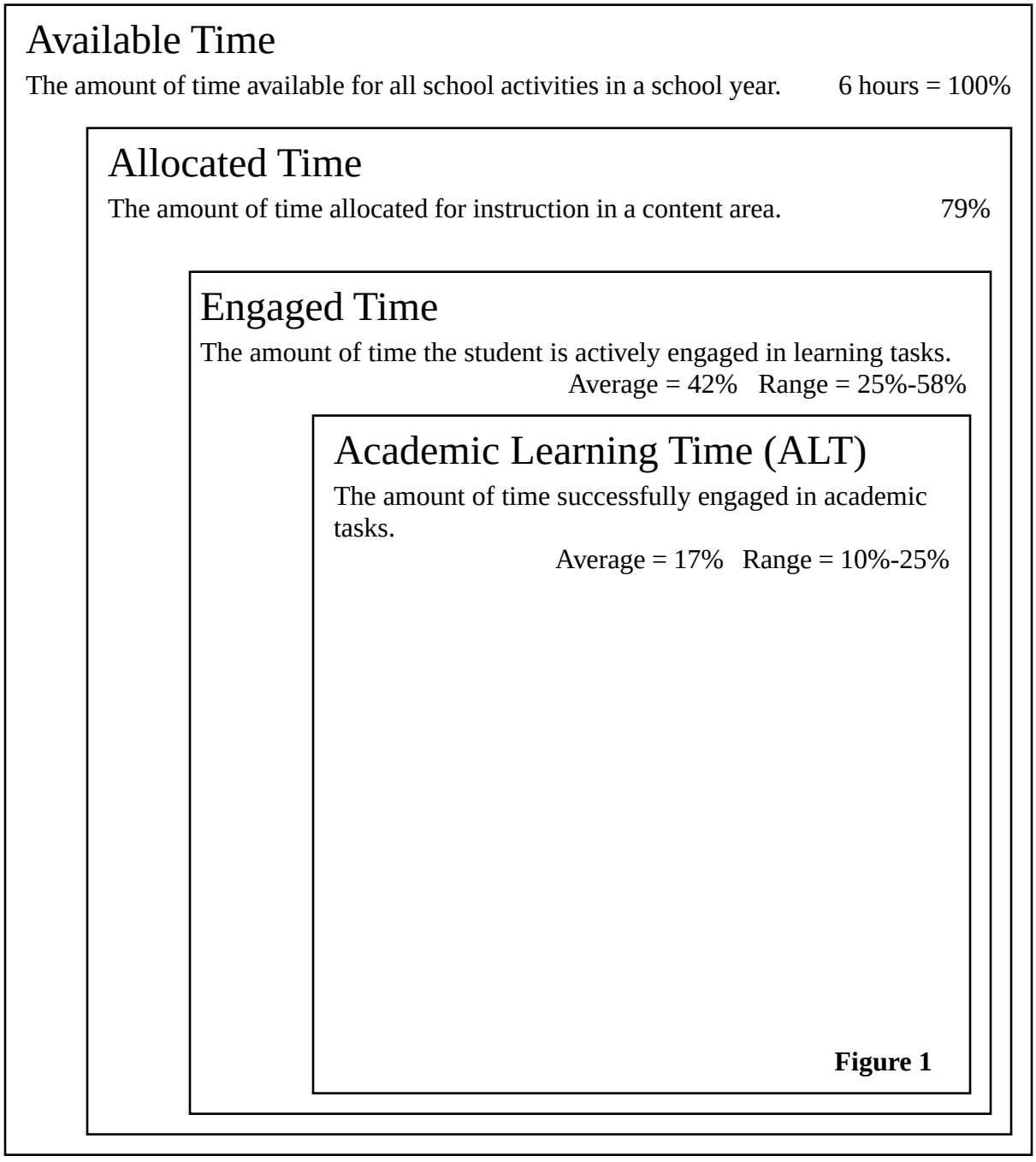

Figure 1

Available Time.

This is the time available for all school activities. The available time is limited by the number of days in a school year (approximately 180 days) and the number of hours in a school day (approximately six hours, including one hour of break time). Available time will be divided among all the diverse functions of a school, including the recreational, social, and academic goals that form the mandated and the hidden curriculum present in every school district.

Schools vary only slightly in the number of school days in a school year, but there is considerably more variability in the hours assigned per day and in the average daily attendance. Variations of up to two hours per day among school districts have been noted (Stallings, 1975). The data on average daily attendance has shown that some schools within the same district provided 50 percent more schooling than other schools because of variations in average daily attendance (Wiley & Harnischfeger, 1974).

Allocated Time.

Allocated time is the amount of time assigned for instruction in a content area, without reference to the quality of the activities being conducted during that time. In allocating time to a specific curriculum area, one must consider how the time is allocated as well as total time set aside for the class. The amount of time and the way it is distributed during the day, week, and school year are issues related to allocated time. In an extensive multi year study of teaching practices, the following findings on the allocation of time were reported (Fisher et al., 1980):

> Within reading and mathematics, classes differed in the amount of time allocated to different skill areas. For example, in one second-grade class, the average student received 9 minutes of instruction over the whole school year in the arithmetic associated with the use of money. This figure can be contrasted with classes where the average second grader was allocated 315 minutes per school year in the curriculum content area of money. As another example, in the fifth grade some classes received less than 1,000 minutes of instruction in reading comprehension for the second year (about 10 minutes per day). This figure can be contrasted with classes where the average student was allocated almost 5,000 minutes of instruction related to comprehension during the school year (about 50 minutes per day) [p. 16].

Berliner (1984), in a review of the research literature on content decision, make the following observations:

- The assumption that the curriculum and associated time allocations are set by school boards and administrators is only partly true. The final arbiter of what is taught is the classroom teacher.
- The research has documented wide variations among teachers for both content and time allocation decisions, even in the presence of clear and mandatory regulations detailing content and time allocations.
- The empirical data relating to content coverage, or content emphasis to achievement, is clear. The opportunity to learn a content area is perhaps the most potent variable in accounting for achievement in that area.

Berliner concluded his review of content decision with the following statement by Buchmann and Schmidt (1981):

> During the school day, elementary school teachers can be a law unto themselves, favoring certain subjects at their discretion. What is taught matters, hence arbitrariness in content decisions is clearly inappropriate. If personal feelings about teaching subject matters are not bounded by an impersonal conception of professional duties, children will suffer the consequences. Responsibility in content decision making requires that teachers examine their own conduct, its main springs and potential effects on what is taught [p. 54].

Engaged Time.

Engaged time is the amount of time the student is actively involved in such learning tasks as writing, listening, and responding to teacher questions. Engaged time does not include classroom tasks such as handing in a paper or waiting for a teacher to pass out materials, or inappropriate activities such as disruptive talking to another student or daydreaming.

Doyle (1986), in reporting on some of the most well-documented research on teacher behavior by Gump (1967), stated:

> Gump found that approximately one-half of the teachers' acts involved instruction (questions, feedback, imparting knowledge, etc.). The rest of the time the teachers were involved in organizing and arranging students for instruction and orienting them to tasks (23% average), dealing with deviant behavior (14%), and handling individual problems and social amenities (12%) [p. 399].

Academic Learning Time (ALT).

Academic learning time has been defined as time spent by a student engaged on a task in which few errors are produced and where the task is directly relevant to an academic outcome (Romberg, 1980). The concept of ALT represents a considerable refinement over engaged time. Romberg noted that ALT is positively correlated with achievement, whereas time unsuccessfully engaged in academic tasks is negatively related to student achievement.

In order to determine which tasks were directly relevant to an academic outcome, ALT researchers emphasized correspondence between the tasks and the tests that would be used to measure student achievement. The alignment among the teacher's instruction, student learning activities, the curriculum, and tests of student outcomes is an important issue that will be treated in more detail in "Academic Monitoring." ALT addresses one of these relationships–namely, the alignment between the student learning activity and the test used to measure student outcomes. Clearly, increasing academic learning time is a high priority for the teacher. The measurement of ALT is complex, because one has to combine the assessment of the time-on-task with measures of success and measures of the appropriateness of the learning tasks.

In one study (Fisher et al., 1980) that documented ALT in a large number of classrooms, it was noted that ALT varied from four to fifty-two minutes per day. The researchers commented on this finding as follows:

> It may appear that this range from 4 to 52 minutes per day is unrealistically large. However, these times actually occurred in the classes in the study. Furthermore, it is easy to imagine how either 4 or 52 minutes per day of Academic Learning Time might come about. If 50 minutes of reading instruction per day is allocated to a student who pays attention about a third of the time, and one-fourth of the student's reading time is at a high level of success, the student will experience only about 4 minutes of engaged reading at a high success level. Similarly, if 100 minutes per day is allocated to reading for a student who pays attention 85 percent of the time at a high level of success for almost two-thirds of the time [he or she] will experience about 52 minutes of Academic Learning Time per day [p. 23].

The ALT notion of success in the engaged tasks represents a major refinement of the concept of engaged time. Marliave and Filby (1985) noted that "student success during instructional tasks is an ongoing learning behavior of equal or greater importance than that of time allocated to criterion-relevant tasks or student attention during those tasks" (p. 222).

Pacing.

Pacing has two related dimensions. One dimension, curriculum, pacing, is concerned with the rate at which progress is made through the curriculum. The second dimension, lesson pacing, is concerned with the pace at which a teacher conducts individual lessons. One team of researchers summed up the importance of pacing as follows:

> . . . researchers have shown that most students, including low-achieving students, learn more when their lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, because a reasonably fast pace serves to stimulate student attentiveness and participation, and because more content gets covered by students. This assumes, of course, that the lesson is at a level of difficulty that permits a high rate of student success; material that is too difficult or presented poorly cannot be learned at any instructional pace [Wyne, Stuck, White, & Coop, 1986, p. 20].

Berliner (1984), in discussing the rate at which progress is made through the curriculum, reported:

> The evidence for the power of the pacing variable keeps mounting. The more the teacher covers, the more students seem to learn. This is hardly shocking news. But again, it is the variability across classes that is more impressive. One teacher adjusts the pace in the workplace and covers half the text in a semester; another finishes it all. One teacher has 20 practice problems covered in a lesson, another manages to cover only 10. One teacher has students who develop a sight vocabulary of 100 words before Christmas, another teacher's students learn only 50 [p. 55].

Thus, pacing, like many other characteristics of effective instruction, shows considerable variability among teachers and has a pronounced effect on student achievement.

In comparing the effective and less effective teachers, Good, Grouws, and Ebmeier (1983) noted that the less effective teachers covered 37 percent less when measured on a daily rate. Less effective teachers tended to try and catch up late in the course and then provided too much material without any distributed practice to consolidate and review the content. Clearly, the amount of content covered daily relates to other skills and should be viewed as both a symptom and a cause.

Transition Time.

A lesson consists of a series of related instructional activities, including demonstrations, discussions, guided practice, and independent practice. Considerable time can be wasted if the transitions between these different activities within a lesson are not managed quickly and smoothly. To facilitate smooth transitions that maintain instructional momentum and student attention, teachers must demonstrate a wide range of curriculum and classroom management skills.

One method of reducing transition time (which is not necessarily recommended) involves reducing the number of lesson activities. For example, a teacher who confines a lesson to one activity ("Work the examples at the end of Chapter 6 and raise your hand if you want help") will have no trouble with transition time, because transitions will be eliminated. However, the omission of activities, such as guided practice, may reduce learning outcomes.

For transitions to occur quickly and smoothly,

- The teacher must have materials ready and demonstrate confidence in closing one activity and initiating the next.
- The teacher must exercise increased vigilance during the transition period.
- The student must enter the next activity with interest and the expectation of success.

In summarizing the research on effective instruction and transitions, Doyle (1986) made the following observation:

> . . . skilled managers marked the onset of transitions clearly, orchestrated transitions actively, and minimized the loss of momentum during these changes in activities. Less effective managers, on the other hand, tended to blend activities together, failed to monitor events during transitions, and took excessively long to complete the movement between segments. Transitions appear to require considerable vigilance and teacher direction to accomplish successfully [p. 416].

The skillful management of transitions does far more than save time. Kounin and Doyle (1975) reported that misbehavior is most likely to occur when there is a lag in the continuity of a lesson. Gump (1967) found that teachers dealt with more deviant behaviors during transitions than during any other time. Ross (1983) stated that the management of transitions was one of the critical management tasks faced by teachers. No surgeon manipulates more interacting complex variables in a short time span than does the master teacher managing a transition. Ross (1983) searched the research literature for management procedures for "reducing the chaos of transitions" and identified a number of principles, including advance preparation, use of routines, and move-

ment management. These principles are discussed in more detail in "Practical Suggestions: Time Management."

Instructional Momentum.

Pacing and transition time management contribute to instructional momentum (see Figure 2.2). Both teacher and student need to feel a sense of movement through the curriculum. A loss of momentum will indicate structural problems in the instruction. A prolonged loss of momentum will have destructive, affective consequences for both teacher and student as well as a negative effect on student achievement. Well-maintained momentum has positive affective consequences for student and teacher.

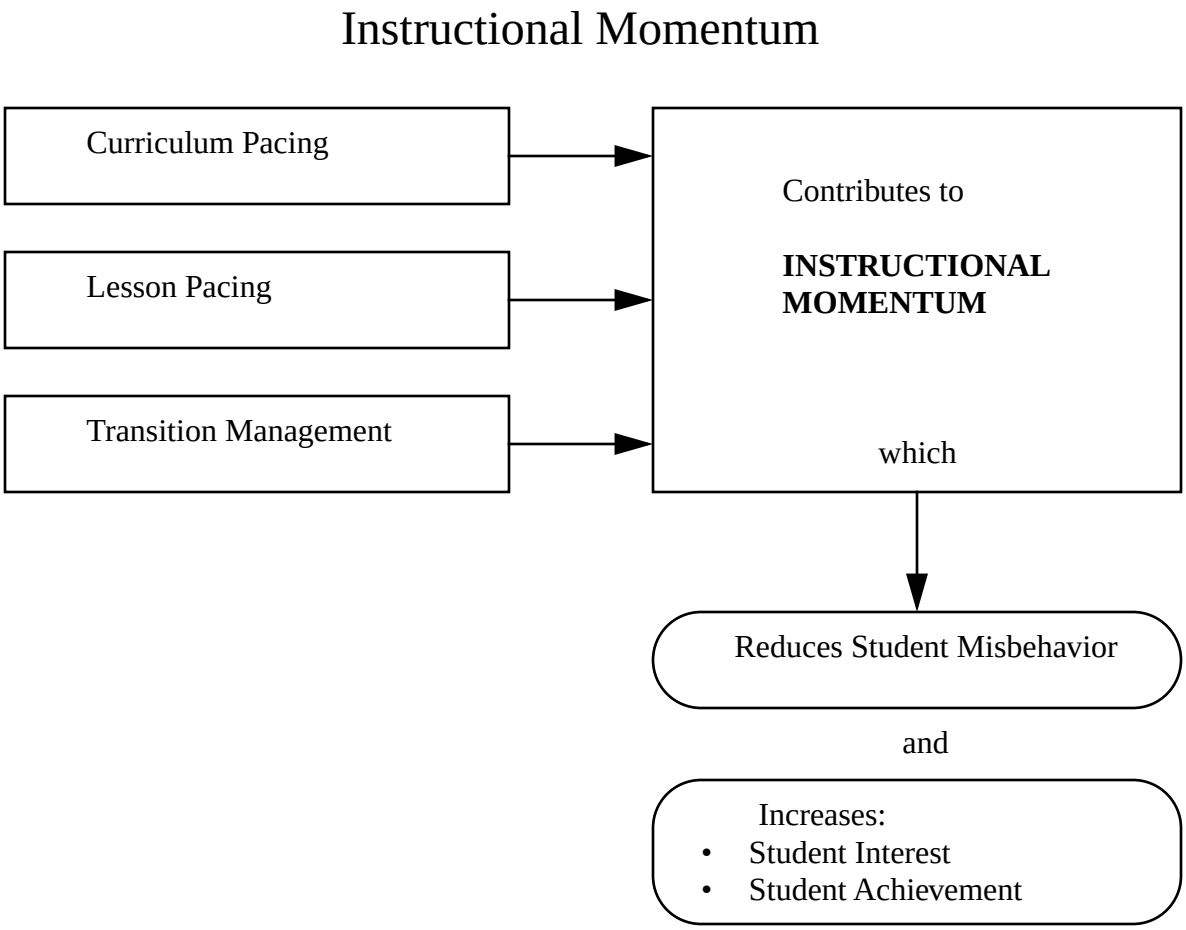

Figure 2

Check Answers

Knowledge Quiz: Time Management

Multiple Choice

Question 1

- ☐ 1. Allocated time refers to the quality and quantity of time available.
- ☐ 2. Allocated time refers to the quantity of time available for instruction.
- ☐ 3. There is little relationship between allocated time and student achievement.
- ☐ 4. There is no relationship between allocated time and student achievement.

Question 2

- ☐ 1. Engaged time includes the time a student spends waiting quietly for the lesson start.
- ☐ 2. Helping the teacher set up the overhead projector is engaged time.
- ☐ 3. Time spent on "busy work" is not engaged time.
- ☐ 4. Time spent actively engaged in all instructional tasks is engaged time.

Question 3

- ☐ 1. ALT is essentially the same as engaged time.
- ☐ 2. ALT is academic looking time.
- ☐ 3. ALT places an emphasis on student success in the task.
- ☐ 4. Increasing the number of transitions increases ALT.

Question 4

- ☐ 1. Learning is increased if each lesson is restricted to a single learning activity, such as guided practice or independent practice.
- ☐ 2. The time spent in changing from teacher demonstration to student practice would be an example of transition time.
- ☐ 3. Increasing transition time increases achievement, because teachers and students can get a much needed rest.
- ☐ 4. Reducing the number of lesson activities reduces transition time and increases achievement.

Question 5

- ☐ 1. Slowing the presentation pace is the best way to help low achievers.
- ☐ 2. Allowing students to work independently at their own pace is clearly the only way to go.
- ☐ 3. Pacing refers to both the rate at which the class progresses through the curriculum and the pace at which lessons are conducted.
- ☐ 4. A brisk pace should always be used, regardless of student success.

Question 6. An engaged time level of 90 percent

☐ 1. is impossible.
☐ 2. can be accomplished regularly by very effective teachers.
☐ 3. is typical of most teachers.
☐ 4. is easily achieved.

Question 7. In schools where the curriculum content and time allocations are clear,

☐ 1. there is little variability in engaged time among teachers.
☐ 2. there is virtually no variability in engaged time.
☐ 3. there will be only modest variability in engaged time, based on student needs.
☐ 4. time allocations can vary by several hundred percent.

Question 8. Research shows that the final arbiter of what is taught is

☐ 1. the teacher.
☐ 2 the curriculum supervisor.
☐ 3. the superintendent.
☐ 4. the school board.

Question 9. Research shows that, provided teachers use the same text,

☐ 1. there is little difference in the amount of material covered.
☐ 2. there can be a large difference in material covered.
☐ 3. there is little variability in what students learn.
☐ 4. difference in content covered will be related to student needs.

Question 10. Effective transitions

☐ 1. provide a break for the teacher.
☐ 2. give students a lengthy break.
☐ 3. require increased vigilance by the teacher.
☐ 4. take the pressure off teacher and students.

Fill in the Blanks:

Question 11.
The approximate time allocations in a school day are 100 percent for available time,

1. 79 percent for _____
2. 42 percent for _____
3. 17 percent for _____

Question 12.

1. _____ ,
2. _____ , and
3. _____ contribute to instructional momentum.

Question 13.

The majority of behavior problems occur during _____

Question 14.

_____ refers to the amount of time allocated for instruction in a content area.

Question 15.

The notion of student success is a part of _____ , but is not present in engaged time.

Check Answers

Practical Suggestions: Time Management

The practical suggestions in this section represent a collection of ideas based on classroom observations, experience, and a review of the effective teaching literature and teacher magazines. Feel free to incorporate any of these suggestions that work for you.

Increasing Allocated Time

Keep Sufficient Materials and Supplies Available.

1. Run off extra worksheets. Use them with students who "forget" their homework assignments.
2. Have worksheets/activities planned for students who finish early.
3. Make certain worksheets are sequenced in the order they will be used.
4. If there is more than one page in a handout, be sure that you have collated and stapled the pages.
5. Elicit the assistance of students or parent volunteers in completing preparation activities.

Have Necessary Equipment and Supplies Available.

1. If you are using audio equipment, test the equipment before you plan to use it.
2. If you are using an image projector or an overhead projector, make certain you have a spar bulb available.
3. Make certain you have sufficient extension cords and electrical adapters.
4. Check to see if a technical person will be available when you plan to use audiovisual equipment. Know where to find this person.
5. Regularly check to see that you have sufficient supplies of office materials such as pens, pencils, and markers.

Keep Materials and Equipment Easily Accessible.

1. Store materials near the area where they are to be used. Transportable boxes may be helpful.

2. Use file folders to store worksheets for separate individuals or groups.

3. Keep your daily schedule and lesson plans open on your desk or worktable.

Plan the Collection and Correction of Homework.

1. Ask students who have not finished their homework to write "yes" on the blackboard. (You can then easily count how many students have finished their homework and how many have not.)

2. When calling roll, have students respond "yes" if they have done their homework, and "no" if they have not.

3. Ask for choral answers to each problem in a homework assignment. When the chorus weakens, tag the problem as being difficult. As each answer is given, ask students to circle the problems they have worked incorrectly.

4. Count the number of students who answered each problem correctly and incorrectly by calling out the problem number and asking students to raise their hands if they answered the problem correctly.

5. If a student fails to return a homework assignment, have him or her take a duplicate copy of the assignment and begin working on it in another part of the classroom. Reinforce the student for working quietly.

6. If a student has partially completed a homework assignment, ask him or her to correct as much of it as is completed and then proceed to another part of the room to complete the work. Reinforce the student for working quietly.

The entire homework-checking procedure should take less than five minutes.

Increasing Engaged Time

Begin Classwork on Schedule.

1. Establish a schedule of classes and post a copy where all students can see it.

2. Initially, provide a reward for those who begin classwork on schedule. Gradually tone down the reward and praise for those who begin on time.

Get the Attention of the Class.

1. Give a signal or verbal prompt, such as "When everyone is sitting quietly, we will begin our math lesson."

2. Wait until all students have come to order before beginning the class.

3. Praise the group when all students are attending.

Get the Class Started after Breaks in the Schedule.

1. Establish a routine activity, such as a three-minute math facts sheet, to begin immediately after a break. During the break, place math facts worksheets face down on students' desks.

2. Use the setting of a kitchen timer as the signal to begin work.

3. Develop a set of index cards with review questions. Begin the class by randomly selecting two or three of the questions and asking the group to answer them. "Brain teasers" or riddles may also be used in a similar manner.

Use Nondisruptive Signals to Get Students Involved.

1. Use eye contact to indicate desired behavior.

2. Use a hand signal to designate appropriate behavior.

3. Post room rules in the classroom. Use a verbal cue, such as "Remember what to do," to indicate that students should refer to the appropriate rule.

4. Stand near those students who might have difficulty focusing on their work.

Focus Students' Attention on Instructional Tasks.

1. (1) Use a verbal prompt such as, "Ready!"

2. (2) Inform students of a reinforcing activity that is contingent on completing a particular task. For example, say, "When we have finished this math worksheet, it will be time for recess."

Circulate around the room.

1. First, make certain that the work has been well prepared, introduced, and explained, so that most students can progress smoothly through an independent practice assignment rather than waiting for help.

2. When circulating, most of your interactions with students should be fairly brief.

3. Make certain the physical layout of your room facilitates movement among student's desks.

4. Have a few extra chairs available so that you can easily sit down if you need to help a student for a short time.

5. If students are waiting to be helped, ask them to go on to the next problem if they are able, so that they do not waste time.

Increasing Academic Learning Time

Enhance Students' involvement.

1. Attempt to make a correlation between the instructional task and the students' personal lives. Example: "Let's say you wanted to buy a pack of gum at the store; you have 25 cents, but the gum costs 35 cents. How much more do you need?"

2. Ask students to describe situations where they have needed to use math to solve a problem in their personal lives. For example, ask them to describe a shopping experience.

Make Certain Students Attend to Initial Presentations.

1. Make certain you have eye contact with students when describing lesson content, giving directions, asking questions, and assigning activities.

2. Make certain that students listen to comments made by other students during small-group discussions.

3. To make certain that students have attended to information you or another student have presented, ask them to repeat the information back to you in their own words.

Involve Students in the Instructional Activity.

1. Watch for student behaviors that indicate they are involved in the lesson or activity. Such behaviors include listening, responding, reading, writing, and participating in group work.

2. Ask students questions that confirm whether or not they have been involved in the lesson or instructional activity. "Who, Why, When, Where, and How" questions are usually fairly easy to generate quickly.

Provide Relevant Lessons and Assignments.

1. Avoid giving students "busy work."

2. Find out what students are interested in and build instructional activities around those interests.

3. Develop a questionnaire that determines what students are interested in. (This could be part of a writing assignment.)

4. Focus on teaching students the skills they most need to know in their daily lives, such as time, money, and measurement.

Organize Presentations.

1. Task-analyze the concept or task being presented, paying special attention to the structure and sequencing involved.

2. Script or outline the steps of the lesson. When you present the lesson, tape-record or videotape it so that you can check to see how well your presentation followed the outline.

3. Prepare to teach new material in small steps so that the possibility for errors in learning is lessened.

4. Plan to practice until overlearning occurs. That is, students should continue to practice beyond the point where they can do the task accurately. Automaticity is also important.

5. Think about whether the concepts, vocabulary, sentence structure, and examples in your presentations are consistent with students' levels of understanding and rate of learning.

6. Group study, tutorial help, textbooks, workbooks, programmed instruction units, audiovisual methods, and academic games can be used to help organize effective presentations.

7. Avoid including extraneous material in instructional presentations.

8. Structure facilitates memory. If new information is presented in a structured manner, students can more easily reconstruct the steps in a given learning process.

9. Use specific, concrete procedures.

Pacing Curriculum and Lessons

Cover an Appropriate Amount of Material.

1. There is a direct relationship between the amount of material covered and the amount students learn. Establish a yearly schedule for covering the required curriculum.

Pace Presentations.

1. When students respond correctly, comment quickly on their responses and move on.

2. In most situations, pause no more than one second between questions.

3. If you are working at an appropriate level of difficulty for a group of students, your expectations of their potential should not greatly affect the pace. That is, even if you are working with a group of students who function below grade level, this doesn't mean that you have to present information at a slower pace, provided you are working at a level they can understand.

4. Reduce the level of difficulty rather than slow down the pace.

Decreasing Transition Time

Prepare Students in Advance.

1. Warn students about upcoming transitions. A few minutes before a change in activity, warn students that the change is impending. This is especially helpful at the beginning of the school year or the beginning of a new schedule.

2. Provide students with verbal directions to facilitate transitions. Describe in a step-by-step manner exactly what the expected procedure will be. Transition can involve a physical movement or a change in focus.

3. Make certain students are attending before giving directions for transitions.

Bring Activities to Closure.

1. Bring activities to closure before the transition occurs. This can be accomplished by summarizing the main points of the lesson or bringing a halt to a recess activity.

2. When students are involved in self-paced activities, such as independent practice, let students know every ten minutes or so how much time they have left to work.

Establish Routines to Facilitate Transitions.

1. Establish a standard set of actions to facilitate transitions. Students need to know clearly what is expected of them. They should be able to make transitions without explicit direction from the teacher.

2. Establish a procedure for students who complete work early. This will reduce the amount of time they spend waiting for their classmates to finish assignments.

3. When some students finish an assignment early, reinforce those who find something appropriate to do while they are waiting.

Manage Student Movement During Transitions.

1. Plan for movement transitions within the classroom, out of the classroom, and into the classroom. Consider the number of students involved in the transition: only one student, a group of students, or the entire class.

2. For each transition, decide whether students should move from one activity to another individually or as a group.

3. Determine whether students need to "line up" to move from one activity to another, or whether they should move independently. Consider the amount of disruptive, inappropriate behavior that occurs with each procedure.

4. When students are waiting in line, engage them in a teacher-directed activity. This is a great opportunity for a quick review of math facts or for reciting prose.

5. Teach students to bring necessary materials when moving to small-group sessions.

Train Students to Respond to Signals.

1. Teach students to respond immediately to a signal to move about the room.

2. Develop and use the same signal for each transition.

3. Establish transition procedures and practice them.

4. During the day, keep track of the number and length of transitions. Using a stopwatch can be helpful in keeping track of transition time.

6. Avoid Interruptions.

1. Don’t allow transition periods to interrupt the flow of the lesson.

2. After starting a new activity, don’t return to an old one.

3. Avoid irrelevant announcements and ill-timed interjections.

4. Be prepared to manage two types of transitions: student transitions (sharpening a pencil, getting a drink of water) and teacher transitions (locating a set of worksheets, answering a telephone call).

5. When working with a group of students, don’t spend excessive time with any one student.

6. Don’t digress or get sidetracked on irrelevant issues.

7. Following student responses, continue quickly with the presentation.

8. Save time by collecting papers after students have started the next activity.

Instructions for Self-evaluation

Each of the checklists evaluates five major instructional skills. For example, Skill 2 on the Time Management Checklist addresses engaged time, and the instructional skill is broadly defined by the statement, "A high percentage of the allocated time is spent 'on-task' by students." Several evaluation questions are provided in each skill area. These evaluation questions provide a functional definition of the instructional skills and a vehicle for the self-evaluation process. You should feel free to add additional evaluation questions that further describe your instructional practices in this area.

For each evaluation question, you should fill in a numerical rating and any helpful comments that will further describe the skill. For the numerical rating, use the following four-point scale and associated criteria.

1. No change is needed in present practices.
2. There are minor problems that can be corrected quickly and easily.
3. There are major problems that will require a considerable investment in time and effort.
4. I need more specific information on my own behavior before I can decide whether I have a problem.

In most cases, the numbers 2 through 4 should be followed by a comment that addresses the issue in more detail. It will be helpful in the subsequent planning for instructional improvement if the comment addresses the context. For example, the evaluation question, "a. Does a lesson start quickly and smoothly?" might be followed by a rating of "2," indicating a minor problem. This rating might then be followed by the comment, "Have difficulty with Monday morning language arts lessons." Such a comment would not be unusual for a teacher who makes a considerable investment in class preparation on weekdays but might not be highly prepared on Mondays.

If the teacher had difficulty achieving a smooth, quick start to most of the daily language arts lessons, a rating of "3," indicating a major problem, would be more appropriate. Any ineffective instructional practice that is consistently present, or any practice that adversely and systematically affects the quality of education of even one student, should be classified as a major problem.

Please feel free to make multiple copies of the self-evaluation checklists. The copyright on the self-evaluation checklists in waived in cases where the copies are used in conjunction with this content.

You will notice that no attempt has been made to provide global numerical scores. This information is intended to facilitate instructional improvement rather than the classification of teachers based on some number. The intent of the evaluation effort will be achieved by a progressive and systematic process that consolidates strengths and replaces less effective instructional practices with more effective ones. Any attempt to summarize or provide global numerical scores might serve only to de-emphasize the specific practical information needed to drive the self-improvement process.

A professional evaluation effort is not something that occurs once every year or two and culminates in some global classification of a teacher; it should involve the teacher in an active and continuous role. Teachers should accept the primary responsibility for identifying practices that consolidate strengths and replace less effective practices with more effective ones. For each major topic, you will find suggestions for the self-improvement planning process.

Self-evaluation Checklist: Time Management

Rating Scale:	1 – No change	2 – Minor problems	3 – Major problems	4 – Insufficient information

Skill 1. Allocated Time The maximum possible time is allocated for direct intensive instruction.		
Evaluation Questions	**Rating and Notes**	
a. Are the time allocations for class changes and breaks unnecessarily long?		
b. Are non-curricular activities taking time could be allocated to curricular activities?		
c. Do the time allocations reflect teacher interests rather than student needs?		
d. Is allocated time scheduled to ensure that continuity and systematic review are facilitated?		

Skill 2. Engaged Time A high percentage of allocated time is spent “on-task” by students.		
Evaluation Questions	**Rating and Notes**	
a. Does the lesson start quickly and smoothly?		
b. How long after the start of a lesson did it take to have all students on-task?		
c. Are large amounts of the allocated time being taken up with managerial tasks?		
d. Is transistion time for lesson activities excessive?		
e. Is there a reduction in instructional intensity near the end of the lesson?		

Skill 3. Individual Engaged Time All students, low and high achievers, are on-task.		
Evaluation Questions	**Rating and Notes**	
a. Is the teacher moving about the classroom, actively checking on all students?		
b. Do the teacher's questioning procedures suggest a preference for high or low achievers?		
c. Does the teacher structure activities so that student nonparticipation is facilitated?		
d. Are the high achieving students becoming bored?		
e. Are attractive "back-up" activities available for early finishers?		

Skill 4. Teacher Use of Time Teacher practices model a concern for the effective use of instructional time.		
Evaluation Questions	**Rating and Notes**	
a. Are all instructional materials and equipment available and operational at the start of the lesson?		
b. Is the teacher physically in the room at the start of the lesson?		
c. Have assignments been corrected in a timely manner?		
d. Is the teacher giving full attention to the instructional tasks?		
e. Is the teacher conducting the lesson at a brisk and interesting pace?		

Skill 5. Academic Learning Time Indicators of academic learning time should provide evidence of progressive imporvement in instruction.		
Evaluation Questions	**Rating and Notes**	
a. Are high, average, and low achievers on-task and successful?		
b. Am I aware of the amount of "on-task" behavior of all individual in my class?		
c. Am i aware of the actual levels of mastery of individuals in my class?		
d. Has individual "on-task" and mastery information been combined to profile instructional strengths and weaknesses?		
e. Is information on academic learning time directing efforts to improve instruction?		

Self-improvement Plan: Time Management

After completing the self-evaluation checklist and reading through the practical suggestions , you should be prepared to develop a self-improvement plan (SIP). Please complete "Goals and Objectives," on the self-improvement plan, by indicating the goal(s) and objective(s) you wish to include in your plan. Also, write a brief narrative describing your plan to address the requirements in the next four sections and report your progress in the “Results” section.

Name_____ Class_____ Date_____

Goals and Objectives

1. Increase Allocated Time

____ 1. Keep sufficient materials and supplies available.
____ 2. Have necessary equipment and supplies available.
____ 3. Keep materials and equipment easily accessible.
____ 4. Plan the collection and correction of homework.
____ 5. Other_____

2. Increase Engaged Time

____ 1. Begin classwork on schedule.
____ 2. Get the attention of the class.
____ 3. Get the class started after breaks in the schedule.
____ 4. Use nondisruptive signals to get students involved.
____ 5. Focus students’ attention on instructional tasks.
____ 6. Circulate around the room.
____ 7. Other_____

3. Increase Academic Learning Time

____ 1. Enhance students’ involvement.
____ 2. Make certain students attend to initial presentations.
____ 3. Involve students in the instructional activity.
____ 4. Provide relevant lessons and assignments.
____ 5. Organize presentations.
____ 6. Other_____

4. Pace Curriculum and Lessons

____ 1. Cover an appropriate amount of material.
____ 2. Pace presentations.
____ 3. Other_____

Name_____ Class_____ Date_____

5. Decrease Transition Time

____ 1. Prepare students in advance.
____ 2. Bring activities to closure.
____ 3. Establish routines to facilitate transitions.
____ 4. Manage student movement during transitions.
____ 5. Train students to respond to signals.
____ 6. Avoid interruptions.
____ 7. Other_____

Practical Suggestions

Please indicate which of the practical suggestions you plan to use to meet each of the objectives. (You may include practical suggestions from other sources as well.)

Specific Procedures

Please describe the specific procedures you will use to implement the practical suggestions.

Current and Desired Performance

Please describe your current performance and desired performance in regard to each of the objectives you have selected. You may state the performance in terms of student behavior, such as percentage of engaged time.

Name_____ Class_____ Date_____

Timelines and Change Measures

Please describe your timelines and how you will measure change in relationship to the objective(s) you have selected.

Results

Upon completion of your self-improvement project, write a brief description of the results of the implementation. Attach any raw data sheets that were used to gather information and describe any changes that were made during your project.

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