

Bag of Tricks

• Testing

Why do our kids fail tests, even after extensive study?

Test format may have caused confusion

Test format didn't provide enough room to write the answers (or work the problems)

Student didn't have enough time to finish

Student didn't record his answers in the right spot on Scantron bubble sheets

Something in the environment was so distracting, they couldn't focus

Pressure of time demands worsened ability to focus

ADD/ADHD students have good days and not-so-good days

ADD/ADHD students often rush through tests and make careless errors,
especially if they can do something fun when the test is over, such as recess

Bag of tricks:

Extended time

even for ADD/ADHD students

they don't go from point A to point B in a straight line

Shorten the test for ADD/ADHD student instead of offering extra time

cross off questions to shorten the test BEFORE giving it to student

or if test has multiple sections, allow student to look at test and cross off two sections

or if test has multiple pages, allow student to not complete XX number of pages

Grade based on percent of answered questions that were correct

Shortening a test is better than extended time

ADD/ADHD students already have such a burden of work, it's like punishment

Often, they have to ASK for the extra time

ADHD students don't want to look different by asking for extra time

Many would rather flunk than look different

If they continue taking the test in the regular classroom

but everyone else is finished

the noise and movement to contend with

Extra time in a more appropriate environment

so they have to miss lunch, stay after school, or miss a different class

On tests, don't count off for spelling and handwriting legibility

or for grammar or complete sentences

grade on CONTENT, not form

If student was given adjusted assignments

you can't test him on items that were not part of those assignments

just cross off those items on his test sheet BEFORE giving it to him

Corrective Discipline

- **Discipline = to teach, NOT to punish**

Punishment does NOT change behavior

If effective, it teaches him to stop one specific behavior
but it doesn't teach him what to replace it with

New habits are established through success and praise
so you can't just punish

you must help the child adopt new patterns of conduct.

- **Three goals of punishment**

To stop a student from persisting with his offensive behavior

To punish the child for his present misconduct

To prevent recurrence of the misbehavior

- **Punishment must fit the crime**

Punishment must be related to what went wrong

writing name on table top results in washing all table tops in the class

chewing gum in class results in cleaning gum out of water fountains

Do not punish something bad by taking away something unrelated at which he is good

i.e. don't punish him for a bad grade by taking him off the baseball team

- **Punishment must be immediate & definite**

If it can't be immediate, make sure it is definite

"We don't have enough time right now."

"But come back here right after school today and wash every table."

Students may think you won't punish them in public, on a field trip, etc.

but you must:

set up clear rules and consequences in advance

be sure to get the offending student to a private place

"step out into the hall" and guide him to an exit

no shouting, no scene

- **Discipline must be consistent**

It cannot be delivered haphazardly

this creates sneaky children who try to figure out how they can get away with it this time.

Children aren't stupid

if a particular action ALWAYS results in an unpleasant experience

they will give up and move on to something else

Minimize distractions during the test

let student use a headset with ocean sounds to block auditory distractions

offer a way to take test by themselves

NOT in library (too much movement, visual distraction)

Don't promise students that they can go out to recess when they finish

desire for this "reward" causes ADD/ADHD students to rush and make careless mistakes

On math tests

ADD/ADHD students often fail to notice that the math operation sign changed

have them color code each sign BEFORE they start to answer the questions

highlight plus signs in yellow, minus signs in red, etc.

DON'T distribute graded tests or collect completed tests by passing them up/down the rows

other students will notice the adapted test

other students will see the grades

this embarrasses our ADD/ADHD students and opens them up to teasing

- **Prevent overwhelm response to worksheets**

Bag of tricks:

Reduce the number of problems per page

Or distribute one page at a time

Or fold the page in half so student only sees half the problems

Or have student put ruler under row of problems he's working on
and put a blank piece of paper over rest of page

Or create a "window" out of a large index card
so student can focus on just the problem inside the window

Or write each problem on its own index card
feed cards to ADD/ADHD student one at a time

- **If ADD/ADHD student starts to become disruptive**

Bag of Tricks:

Use a child's name
they can often hear it through the noise and clutter

Distract him
call on him to answer a question, read a passage, point to a place on the map,
take something to the office, etc.

Move closer to the child

Tell them specifically what to do
such as: "put down that box and pay attention to me" or "I need your eyes up here"
or "look in my eyes."

If student has contagious behavior, such as uncontrolled giggling, hiccupping, etc.
send him on an errand
to deliver something to office, return books to library, etc.
that prevents his behavior from disrupting the rest of the class

Or ignore the behavior
but don't ignore the need
the student may try (inappropriately) to ask for help or get your attention

- **If Student asks too many questions**

(especially if they are inappropriate or unnecessary)

Inform him he is only allowed to ask 3 questions per class

When he raises his hand, remind him:

"John, you only have 1 question remaining for this class.

Is this question important & necessary?"

Let him decide

- **Minimize Distractions**

Bag of Tricks:

Install privacy cubicles and encourage ALL kids to use them
even just visual blockers on top of a desk help

Minimize auditory distractions

use of a headset with ocean sounds will block other auditory distractions

Some ADD/ADHD students concentrate better with music in the background

Earplugs may also help

- **Ways to Capture (or recapture) their Attention**

Bag of Tricks:

Establish eye contact before you begin the lesson

"I need all eyes up here please"

Let students know when you reach an important point

"Pay attention. This is important."

"This will be on the test."

"Look up here."

"Listen, please"

Use the student's name

you may need to change your tone of voice to get through

Gentle touch as you walk by their desk

or slight tap on their desk

Don'ts

- **Never Publicly Humiliate ADD/ADHD Students**

- Don't ask "have you taken your meds today" in front of the class

- Don't force them to write on the bulletin board

- They're often teased for their poor handwriting

- Don't return graded assignments or homework assignments

- by passing them down the rows

- everyone in that row will see the student's handwriting, grades, adjusted assignment, etc.

- Don't make our students look dumb

- Any student would rather be disruptive, disobedient and disrespectful than be viewed as incapable or incompetent

- Remember, ADD/ADHD students have trouble staying in control when they're frustrated

- **Don't Yell at ADD/ADHD Students**

- They will hear the yelling, but not the content

- **Don't Argue**

- You can't win an argument with this type of kid

- If he can get you to argue with him, he's won

- ADD/ADHD students will often go out of their way to get you angry at them

- **Don't Allow Children to Pick Teams for classroom activities**

- No one wants the ADD/ADHD students on their team

- The teacher should have students number off (1-2, 1-2) or split class in half, etc.

- ADD/ADHD students are often not good team players

- due to difficulty waiting their turn, hiding their disappointment, etc.

- so give them leadership roles instead

- such as scorekeeper, equipment manager, etc.

Positive Comments

| Instead of This | Say This |
|---|--|
| "What did you do that for?" | "This is the way to do it." |
| "Don't you know any better?" | "Let me help you." |
| I've told you and told you, but you still do it." | "Here's another way of doing it." |
| "If only you would listen and pay attention." | "Listen." |
| "Just try a little harder and you'll get it right." | "Let's try it this way." |
| "You've made a mistake." | "Make this change and it will be right." |
| You have five words wrong." | "You have 15 fifteen correct." |

101 Ways to Praise a Student

Wow • Way to go • Super • You're special • Outstanding • Excellent
Great • Good • Neat • Well done • Remarkable • I'm proud of you •
I knew you could do it • Fantastic • Superstar • Nice work • Beautiful •
Looking good • You're on top of it • Now you're flying • Bravo •
You're catching on • Now you've got it • You're incredible • How nice
Hooray for you • You're on target • You're fantastic • Good job •
You're on your way • That's incredible • Hot stuff • How smart •
Good thinking • Dynamite • What a blessing you are • You're unique •
How thoughtful • Good for you • I like you • You're a winner •
Remarkable job • Beautiful work • Spectacular • You're so courteous •
You're precious • Great discovery • You've discovered the secret •
You figured it out • Fantastic job • Hip, Hip, Hooray • Magnificent •
Marvelous • Terrific • You're so obedient • You're important •
Phenomenal • Super work • You showed character • What a creative job
Super job • Exceptional performance today • You're a real trooper •
You are responsible • Good improvement • You learned it right •
What an imagination • What a good listener • Great idea • You tried hard
You're growing up • You care • Beautiful sharing • Outstanding
performance • You're a good friend • I trust you • You're important •
Look how much you've learned • You make my day • You belong •
You mean a lot to me • I love working with you • I respect you •
You make me laugh • You brighten my day • That's correct • Awesome
You mean the world to me • You're a joy • You're a treasure • A+ job •
You're wonderful • Good thinking • That's the best • Great spirit

- **Don't Ask Senseless or Unanswerable Questions**

Don't ask a question if it really isn't an option.

Don't ask: "Johnny, will you please put that cap gun away and get to work?"

This makes it optional

What if the kid says no?

Better: "Johnny, please put that cap gun away and get to work."

Don't ask unanswerable questions

Don't ask: "John, why are you still playing with that cap gun when I told you to put it away ten minutes ago?"

Questions should only be used to lead, guide, and help student discover something
NEVER to humiliate

- **Don't Make Threats**

Example: "Todd, stop making those noises or you'll get an extra row of math problems added to your homework."

Student then knows the price he'll have to pay for his misbehavior and may choose to pay it

It may be worth an extra 15 minutes of homework to continue his annoying behavior he now knows how to upset the teacher and disrupt the class

- **Don't Give Schoolwork as Punishment**

It gives the wrong message:

that homework is a bad thing you don't want to do

- **Don't Make Impossible Demands**

- **Don't Keep ADD/ADHD Students In, at recess or lunch too often**

They need to run off excess energy

They need to practice socialization skills

- **Help This Student Organize**

Use Anita Archer's materials to learn effective use of school binders and assignment calendars

Parents should dump out backpack and reorganize its materials weekly
always put completed homework papers in the same spot in binder
teach child where to look

If student attends multiple classes in multiple locations
make all the items for the same class the same color
math book has red book cover, red binder, etc.
science book has green book cover, green binder, etc.
create a color-coded map that matches
so when the student goes to his locker
he's more likely to bring the right things to class

- **Reward Systems**

Bag of tricks:

Let child pick his own rewards in advance

Teachers are often surprised at what the child considers a reward

Social contact with teacher & other students are a good reward

Time on the computer is often a good reward

Help student keep track of own behavior

Create a chart with time blocks

Every time a signal is given, child determines if he met the goal or not

If he did, he puts a star in it

Each star is worth something

Alternative: give student all the points at the beginning

Student has to work to keep their points

On group activities, reward the entire group

"If we can do XX by XX, we'll get out 5 minutes early for recess"

