



## Provide Opportunities for Success

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If you think a student in your class may have working memory deficits, there are several things you can do. First, consider the following checklist items to determine if the behaviors the student displays are related to working memory. Then, consult with a professional for specific academic testing. Strategies for alleviating working memory deficits in the classroom will be discussed in the next issue, so stay tuned!

### WORKING MEMORY CHECKLISTS

The following items have been compiled from a variety of sources. Students who have working memory deficits may:

- ❖ Demonstrate difficulty in following multi-step instructions, forgetting part(s) of the directions
- ❖ Have a short attention span
- ❖ Lose their place in complicated tasks and/or when counting
- ❖ Appear to not be paying attention or be easily distracted
- ❖ Incorrectly completes tasks incorrectly by not follow instructions accurately and/or following only some steps
- ❖ Fail to complete assignments / abandon activities before completion
- ❖ Forget how to complete an activity that has been started, even when the teacher has clearly explained it
- ❖ Put their hands up to answer questions but can not remember what they were going to say
- ❖ Fail to complete common classroom activities that require large amounts of information to be held in mind
- ❖ Display incomplete recall of information or events
- ❖ Benefit from continued teacher support during lengthy activities
- ❖ Depend on a neighbor to remind them of the current task
- ❖ Act reserved in group activities, rarely volunteer answers, or avoid answering direct questions
- ❖ Demonstrate poor monitoring of work quality
- ❖ Not be able to sequence correctly information during oral rehearsal
- ❖ Demonstrate poor academic progress, particularly in reading and math



## WORKING MEMORY ASSESSMENTS

If you believe that a student is presenting working memory deficits, consult with a professional. Academic assessments ask the students to complete a variety of tasks that explore their ability to hold and manipulate information. One such sub-test is the Digit Span that asks students to repeat a string of numbers from memory. The following assessments are available for determining working memory scales.

- Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning
- Working Memory Index- WISC IV
- The Automated Working Memory Assessment (4-22 years)
- Working Memory Test Battery for Children (4-15 years)

## HOW IS THIS PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUCCESS?

The more knowledgeable the classroom teacher is about working memory deficits and recognizing those signs in students, the better the teacher can prepare the classroom environment, instruction, and materials. This understanding will allow students to be taught at an appropriate pace and level without overburdening their working memory capabilities, which will ultimately allow students to be successful within the classroom.

## REFERENCES

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