What Are Effective Strategies For Reducing Transition Between Activities?

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Abstract. The purpose of the study was to create more time for academic learning. The amount of time gained through successful procedures, in two different classrooms, with two different age groups of students reflected in this research. The research took place over a two week time period. The difference between kindergarten and 5th grade students were compared. The kindergarten classroom was very diverse in gender, ethnicity, socioeconomically, and academically. The 5th grade class consisted of only 5 students with less diversity. There are pre and post intervention findings in each grade level. An increase of twenty five minutes a day towards instruction time was the result of this action research.

1. Introduction (Describe your idea)

In a classroom setting the amount of time that is unnecessarily taken away from student learning due to improper transitioning produces a lack of teaching fluidity. As I started this project the main focus was finding new strategies that would cut down transition time. What I discovered was a flawed academic approach. I needed procedures not new strategies. “A smooth-running classroom is the responsibility of the teacher and the result of the teacher’s ability to teach procedures.” [1]. It is important to establish rules based on the age of the student’s and where they are developmentally [2]. “There is no doubt that more learning occurs in a well-managed classroom than in an unruly one”. [3] Thus, a well-managed classroom promotes efficiency, continuity, and enhanced student learning. Furthermore, developing and instilling a consistent and timely routine for students strengthens classroom procedures with clarity. “A routine is what the student does automatically, without prompting or supervision. Thus a routine becomes a habit, practice, or custom for the student.” [1] Therefore, transition is not only a powerful occurrence but it also dictates the entire learning environment for the students. The idea came from the lack of order in two classrooms, my colleague and I thought it would be interesting to compare my kindergarten class and her fifth grade class. It was difficult arriving at class each day knowing the realization of lost instructional time due to the lack of procedures in place. After collaborating we both agreed that we lost time in between activities as well, whether it was going to a special or just transitioning to a new subject in the classroom.

2. Experiment, Results, Discussion, and Significance (Describe how you developed your idea)

Three procedures were implemented in the classroom to promote and establish smooth transitioning. These include: arrival and organization (come in choose milk stick, put folder in cubby, put away backpacks, sign in, and do activity that is out on desks.), group activities (whole group encourages all members of the table to quiet down and earn a slice of pizza to put the whole puzzle together), and line-up and walking to new activities (line up in ABC order, put hands on hips, voices off, and eyes on the person in front of them). All of the charts indicate the results found pre-assessment and post-assessment. The student’s performance was observed daily at various times throughout, but was recorded on two different dates for data. The new procedures were ongoing through the entire action research project time period. They are also being implemented currently in the classroom. Both classes had significant amount of time gained. It was found that we could not compare the classes due to the difference in age appropriate expectations, but we were able to both have positive results, cooperative learning was taught to the student’s through one of the procedures and it proved to be successful. The student’s understood working individually as well as with others.

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Lining up and transitioning to new activities

Figure 1. Individual students lining up and do all three tasks pre-procedures and post-procedures.

Figure 2. Individual students entering and exiting room pre and post procedures.

3. Conclusions

Once the new procedures were implemented and established the classroom as a whole had more learning time, less disturbances, and better classroom management. Fifteen minutes were gained with the arrival and organization procedure, 5 minutes were gained with the collaborative procedure, and 5 minutes were gained with the lining up and transitioning procedure. An increase of twenty five minutes a day towards instruction time was the result of this action research. That is a significant gain in time saved. Procedures are essential in any classroom setting to instill structure, and allow the proper amount of time dedicated towards learning. An efficient and timely learning environment is a critical role in the development and guidance of each student’s education.


4. Acknowledgements

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