

# **Academic Intervention Toolkit**

Filled with interventions to address 16 of  
the most common student deficiencies

### ***Organization is Lacking***

1. Have the student store their materials in the classroom if they're not needed at home.
2. Present the student with multiple storage/organization formats. (e.g. assignment notebooks) Help teach them how to prioritize and organize assignments. (Do not "order them around," however)
3. Offer a calendar with due dates, tests/quizzes, important dates, etc. (for both the student and parent) Be sure to remind the student of important dates, anyway.
4. Don't allow disorganization as an excuse for not completing assignments.
5. If previous assignments/handouts are not needed, make sure they are discarded.
6. Give the student a written list of needed materials for the next day, especially if the materials are not commonly used.
7. Be sure to watch and see how (or if) the student improves. Be sure to point out if something's working, and, if not, try another organizational method.
8. Give time at the beginning and/or end of the class period for the student to get their materials together.
9. Do not hand out more materials than are necessary (e.g. one assignment at a time).
10. Keep in contact with parents and other teachers to make sure they help keep this student organized as well. Do not apply too much pressure to the situation, however.

### ***Cannot Comprehend Abstract Concepts***

1. Relate abstract concepts to real, tangible objects.
2. Be sure to thoroughly teach only one abstract concept at a time. Only start a new concept after the previous is mastered.
3. Review already learned abstract concepts frequently.
4. Make sure that the students are paying full, complete attention.
5. Make sure all concepts/skills that relate to the abstract concept being taught are already mastered.
6. Move slowly and frequently stop to make sure the students are keeping up with what you're teaching.
7. Give plenty of work time for the students to practice and ask questions.
8. Start off using almost purely "real situations"/metaphors, and slowly shift over into dealing purely with the abstract concept (e.g. start off using magnets for electrons and protons, then eventually just shift over to representing the two with their symbols).
9. Work through the first few problems with the students, explaining each step.
10. Be sure to explain the significance of the concept and how it actually works in the real world. All of a sudden it will seem a lot less "bizarre."
11. Encourage question-asking. Allow students to come in during study hall, before/after school/class, and/or in the beginning/end of class. Provide a list of other teachers who might be able to help as well.
12. Move slowly. Do not provide more information than necessary at one time. Teach the abstract concept only, and then deal with a much less "brain-twisting" concept after the abstract one is mastered.

***Doesn't Listen to What is Said the First Time (Directions/Questions)***

1. Have the student write down/take notes of everything that is said.
2. Present directions with only a few steps. Introduce each new step after the previous is completed.
3. Say the student's name, then ask them a question/give them a direction.
4. Ask, don't order, the student to repeat what was just said.
5. Don't allow the student to get away with, "Well, I just didn't realize that I had to listen." (or similar excuses)
6. Present the direction/question in multiple forms (ex: hand out a sheet with what is being said as well).
7. Be sure to speak slowly and clearly, stopping if the student looks confused.
8. Make sure to make eye contact with the student and that they are paying attention.
9. Remove objects around the room that might prove distracting.
10. Do not get angry if a student keeps asking questions or dismiss the question right away. If all else, have the student write down the question for later.

***Cannot Remember Information over Time***

1. Mark/have the student mark important information that should be more closely studied. Give them time every so often in class to allow them to do so.
2. Give the information significance/make it seem important.
3. Use examples/stories/discussions that could further help the student remember the information.
4. Do not present too much information at one time.
5. Reteach/review the information in a variety of teaching formats.
6. Make sure homework presented reviews past information and doesn't present too much new information.
7. Do not present new information until the old information is mastered. Build new information off of old information as well (if possible).
8. Have the student use the newfound information in practice (ex: have a lab dealing with the information).
9. Don't rearrange the seating mid-unit.
10. Review already learned information with decent frequency.

### ***Needs Information Presented at Snail's Pace***

1. Ask the student to rephrase what was just presented in their own words.
2. Present the information piece-by-piece. Don't teach too much at one time.
3. Be consistent in how much you teach in a day.
4. Enforce and review the really important information more strongly than normal.
5. Be sure to be clear and not too quick in your presentation of the information. Stop every so often to make sure the students are keeping up with you.
6. Remove objects that might distract the student.
7. Make sure to use plenty of examples.
8. Associate new material with material already learned.
9. Teach the material multiple times and in multiple ways. Each student learns best in a different way.
10. If a large amount of students work slower/faster than normal, separate the groups into different hours, one that intentionally goes faster and one that intentionally goes slower.

### ***Doesn't Understand what is Read***

1. Have the student mark/highlight important information and key words.
2. Give time in class for students to start reading and ask for help if necessary.
3. Don't test the reading material the next day.
4. Have students pair up while reading. That way, if one doesn't understand something, the other can help.
5. Make sure to have dictionaries available in your room.
6. Make sure to discuss the material the next day.
7. Talk about/give a preview to the reading before actually giving it out, so the student has at least some idea what it's about.
8. Allow for time to read the material more than one time and/or come in for questions.
9. Hand out the reading material in bite-sizes. There is no use to read 10 pages of information if you don't understand the 1<sup>st</sup>.
10. Provide other sources that help explain (though don't summarize) the material.

### ***Can't Do Homework because the Reading is Too Hard***

1. Use simple, step-by-step directions. Have the student do only one step at a time, and then have them do the next after the previous has been checked.
2. Give plenty of time to finish the homework and/or come in and ask for help.
3. Have the student read the directions for an assignment one day, discuss them, and actually have the student do the assignment the next day.
4. Make the homework challenge a student's ability to understand what is being taught, not their ability to read or write (i.e. keep the reading as simple as possible).
5. The more reading an assignment requires, the shorter the actual assignment should be.
6. Explain the directions in-class, going through the first problem or two with the class as an example.
7. Make sure the homework deals with what has already been learned.
8. Provide diagrams/pictures with the reading as a reference point.
9. Allow for time in the beginning of the class period for students to come up and ask questions about the previous day's homework. Students are much more likely to respond to this than an offer to come in for help during a study hall.
10. Make sure that readings/assignments given out at the same time all deal with the same subject matter.
11. Be sure to look at all the readings you give out to students and evaluate how easy they are to read. Make/find a simpler version if necessary.

### ***Cannot do Word Problems***

1. Make sure the word problems are short, very well worded, and only one or two steps long.
2. Have the student paraphrase the problem using their own terminology.
3. Be weary of textbook word problems. They can often be convoluted and confusing to the student.
4. Solve a word problem or two with the class every time the word problems deal with a new form of math problem.
5. Ask the students for any problems from the previous night's homework that they didn't understand. Allow for some work time at the end of class so they can ask questions, also.
6. Make sure the student understands the type of math problem the word problem deals with before they actually try the word problem.
7. Enforce that word problems are no more different or difficult than the math problems being worked on in class.
8. Make sure the students understand which words correlate with which math functions.
9. Have the student read the word problem until they understand it. Then have them write out the math equivalent of the word problem as they read it. Finally, have them look at the word problem one last time and modify the math equation as needed.
10. Every word problem has an equation in it that deals with the current type of math problem you're working on. Have students identify that equation, and have them worry about the actual question in the word problem after they solve the equation.

### ***Fails Frequently***

1. Make tests/quizzes shorter, but give them out more often.
2. Present many ways for the student to review for a test, including a sample test, an extra study session, and (most importantly) a run-down of what will be tested and how it will be tested.
3. Do not act surprised, angry, upset, etc. if the student does not seem to care about their constant failure. If you lose your calm, the student will just care even less, and you will look like a fool in their eyes.
4. Do not mock the student, point out their constant mistakes, preach, or do anything else to make an "enemy" with the student or to make them feel bad about themselves.
5. Have the tests be graded on how much the student knows, not how well they can write or perform unrelated tasks.
6. Do not give tests to students who have no/little hope of passing. Make sure they know the material before you test them on it.
7. Always allow for time at the beginning of class and/or outside of class for students to ask questions.
8. Be very picky on homework, but allow for the student to make corrections. That way, they learn what they should do without having to sacrifice important points in the process.
9. Be sure to review previous units, tests, quizzes, etc. frequently. It makes chance of success on any sort of comprehensive test much easier to achieve.
10. Make sure the student sees success. Only if there seems to be hope at the end will they continue to try. And never lose hope yourself!

### ***Doesn't Pay Attention to The Quality of their Work***

1. Make sure all homework assigned is important, and be sure to assign homework in smaller quantities.
2. Be picky. Point out any quality issues the student is suffering and provide ways to better them.
3. Be consistent in how good of a quality students must have for their assignments.
4. Be sure to provide for time (in the beginning of and/or outside of class) for students to come in for help. Also give out the names of staff that could be of assistance (NOTE: Students are much more likely to ask questions if you provide time in-class for them to do so).
5. Give examples for the proper way to complete homework assignments given out.
6. Allow the student to make corrections to their assignments or have them checked over before they are due.
7. Give time at the end of class for students to start working on their assignments. Walk around to make sure that the current quality is acceptable.
8. Allow plenty of time before the assignment is due in case students have questions or are stressed for time.
9. Make sure to have the student fix the quality mistakes one-at-a-time. Do not expect them to shift from "sloppy" to "pristine" in one leap.
10. Make students with unacceptable quality on their assignments redo said assignments.

### ***Doesn't Complete Homework/Prepare for Class***

1. Make sure the homework is intended as review for concepts already learned, instead of as a way to present new information. Do NOT use homework as a form of punishment.
2. Give out relatively small amounts of homework (e.g. only one or two worksheets). Remind the students of all needed homework/materials for the next day, both in speech and text.
3. Require roughly the same quantity of homework every day.
4. Describe precisely what has to be done for homework and how it should be done, working out an example for each type of problem with the class.
5. Make sure there is a time (such as study hall) for students to work on homework in school (and receive assistance) if necessary.
6. If a student keeps on forgetting to bring a material home or to school, provide a second copy so that they can have one at both locations.
7. If a student does not complete a homework assignment, be sure to make the student finish the assignment anyway (at school if necessary).
8. Do not get angry at, irritated with, or give up on a student who constantly seems to forget.
9. Break up long assignments/projects into smaller assignments/"checkpoints."
10. Do not refuse to lend materials to a student unless they keep on forgetting to return them. Establish a system that requires the student to give you something of theirs while they borrow the material(s).

### ***Doesn't Care about Grades or Performance***

1. Give the student more say in which kind of assignments are to be done (e.g. have them choose one of four assignments to do).
2. Do not throw away the possibility of drug use, especially if the student frequently seems "out of it."
3. Do not belittle, argue with, or criticize the student, and do not start to show distaste towards the student or take their actions of indifference personally.
4. Make sure that the student also realizes their indifference, and try to make them realize what a problem that is. Do not talk to them about this when they are currently being punished for something, however.
5. Talk to friends, family, previous teachers, etc. about the student's behavior. They might have the best advice.
6. Figure out what the student likes to do, and work it into the assignments (but don't make it extremely blunt or childish, like "tell us about your favorite activity" speeches).
7. Take action as soon as you start to see problems develop. Watch carefully for any sort of progress.
8. Check to verify that the student is not getting overwhelmed in extra-curriculars or anything of the sort outside of school.
9. Make sure you demonstrate that you care and are interested in the student. Do not, at all costs, give up on this step or the student.
10. Make the assignments shorter and more doable. Explain why each assignment/lesson is actually significant.

### ***Cannot Remember Assorted Facts***

1. Utilize fill-in-the-blank, "word box," multiple choice, true/false, etc. worksheets for review purposes.
2. *Teach and reteach the material in a variety of mediums.*
3. Do not punish a student if they do not remember a fact or name – instead, reward them if they do remember the fact.
4. Be sure to stop every so often while presenting the information to make sure that the students are still caught up to you.
5. Discuss the material in class and make it important to the student – the more important/interesting something seems, the more likely it will be remembered
6. Have the student mark and/or write down important facts that need to be remembered.
7. Build each new fact upon an old one. Suddenly the insignificant seems important enough to memorize (it also provides review of old facts).
8. Allow plenty of time for study and review, both in and out of class.
9. Divide longer facts/numbers into smaller units, and, in the case of words, define the parts of the words (e.g. from bronchitis to bronch-, which means lung, and -itis, which means the inflammation of).
10. Divide the students up into teams for friendly, slightly competitive activities in which the winner gets Extra Credit points (or some similar reward – one that matters, though, not "candy")
11. Emphasize the successful identification/discussion of facts as inverse to the memorization of them.

### ***Cannot Identify Supporting Details***

1. Make sure the student can figure out what the main idea is. Then have them find anything that "proves/verifies" the main idea.
2. Play Devil's Advocate. As the student tries to explain the main idea, ask them "why?" (e.g. "why is pollution bad?") Be sure to be supporting and not demanding when doing this, however.
3. Double-check that the student understands other language concepts that are present in the reading material.
4. Do not give the student too much to read and too little time to read it.
5. Lessen the "clutter" on the page (e.g. unnecessary pictures, large blocks of text) to make the text seem less frightening and more straightforward.
6. Be sure to provide plenty of practice with supporting details (and other English concepts) even after they have been "mastered."
7. Create an environment where the student isn't afraid to ask a question, no matter how "simple" it is.
8. Make sure to pause every so often in the text and while teaching to make sure the students understand what is being presented to them.
9. Be sure to review what supporting details are, using concise (not broad) explanations and relevant examples.
10. Do not teach other English concepts while working with supporting details.



### ***Will Not Wait for Help from the Teacher***

1. Tell the student you'll help them soon. If you can't however, find another student to help them out instead.
2. Make sure the students all understand the directions after you've given them. You can't waste time repeating directions.
3. Tell the student to move on to the next problem until you have time to help them.
4. Make sure to respond appropriately if a student will not patiently wait for help (i.e. don't blow up at them).
5. Do not put students under a time crunch or have "the best assignment win." Both will cause students to want more of your help more often.
6. Make sure students understand that their work does not have to be perfect, and do not mark off for tiny errors.
7. Provide extra information (e.g. a packet of definitions) someplace in the room in case there are a few common/simple questions. If one question is constantly asked, just explain it to the whole class.
8. Make yourself available for help outside of the classroom as well.
9. Prioritize – even if a student has interrupted you, if their question is very simple/short to answer, answer it.
10. Have a pre-set path around the classroom, going to each student/group and asking if they have any questions. Thus, if a student needs a question answered, they have no choice but to wait.

### ***Won't Take Notes***

1. Make sure to teach/review good note taking,.
2. Point out the information that should, without a doubt, be written down. Tell students when they should/shouldn't take notes.
3. Provide a "note sheet" for students to fill out if they have trouble figuring out what to write down for notes.
4. Give the students a reason to use notes (e.g. allow them to use notes on the smaller tests/assignments).
5. Do not allow a student to perform an assignment if their notes are not thorough enough for it and/or only answer a student's questions if their notes are properly filled out..
6. Make sure that not only is the student in a position (e.g. close enough to hear/see) where they can actually take notes, but be sure to be loud, clear, simple, and slow enough to be understood.
7. Present the information in a variety of mediums (e.g. vocal and PowerPoint).
8. Give out the information in "chunks," stopping to make sure that they comprehend what you have taught them every so often.
9. Check to make sure that the students have the materials out to take notes and are actually taking notes.
10. Keep the information interesting. Discuss it, don't just tell it (otherwise students might drift off).