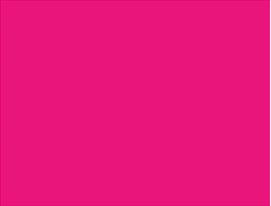


IF I'M SO SMART, WHY IS
SCHOOL SO HARD?

Supporting Students with Asperger Syndrome in
Elementary General Education Classrooms



Executive Function Support

Planning and organization

Executive Function Supports

- **Get the student's buy-in for supports that you suggest:**
 - **“These ideas might help you finish your work sooner. That leaves more time for _____”**
 - **I have an idea that I think will really help you get your work done in class. This will be great because you will have less homework to do.**
- **Analyze tasks to determine the purpose. Eliminate difficult functions that aren't related to the purpose. (if purpose is to capture an idea-handwriting is not a necessary function.)**

Executive Function Supports

- **Give up the idea that the student should “just know.” If they need to know, tell them.**
- **Tell students the purpose of the task. Ex: If it is a rough draft, don’t worry about handwriting and spelling.**
- **Use concept maps, Venn diagrams, other graphic organizers. Make sure that the information is understood to avoid meaningless memorization.**

Executive Function Supports

- Provide an agenda or assignment book-monitor it's use.
 - Ensure that student has assignments recorded correctly.
 - Consider online assignment sheets, a weekly written assignment sheet or a syllabus.
 - Refer to it frequently and check it's accuracy.
 - Events/assignments that are scheduled for the future may need to be referred to every day.
- Model calendar keeping, list making and other memory-enhancing strategies. Talk about what you do and why.

Executive Function Support

- **Notebook and assignment routine:**
 - **Schedule in the notebook**
 - **Pouch for all writing tools and materials**
 - **Color-coded pocket folders for each subject**
 - **Assignment agenda in the notebook-adapted as necessary**
 - **Necessary teacher prompts to consistently place new work, study guides and finished work in specific notebook locations**
 - **List for “notebook check” How often monitored? By whom?**

Executive Function Support

- **Include a “Notebook check” list in the front of the note book so that any adult at home or school can check the notebook**

Note book check

- schedule**
- assignment sheets up to date**
- papers in binder or in pockets**
- option cards**

Executive Function Support

- **Create “task cards” with student (ex: organizing back pack) to support working memory and executive function.**
- **Help student break large tasks down into smaller chunks—make it visual.**
- **Teach routines for commonly occurring tasks or activities-write them down.**
- **Teach the concept of “Plan B” or “Zigger Zagger days”**

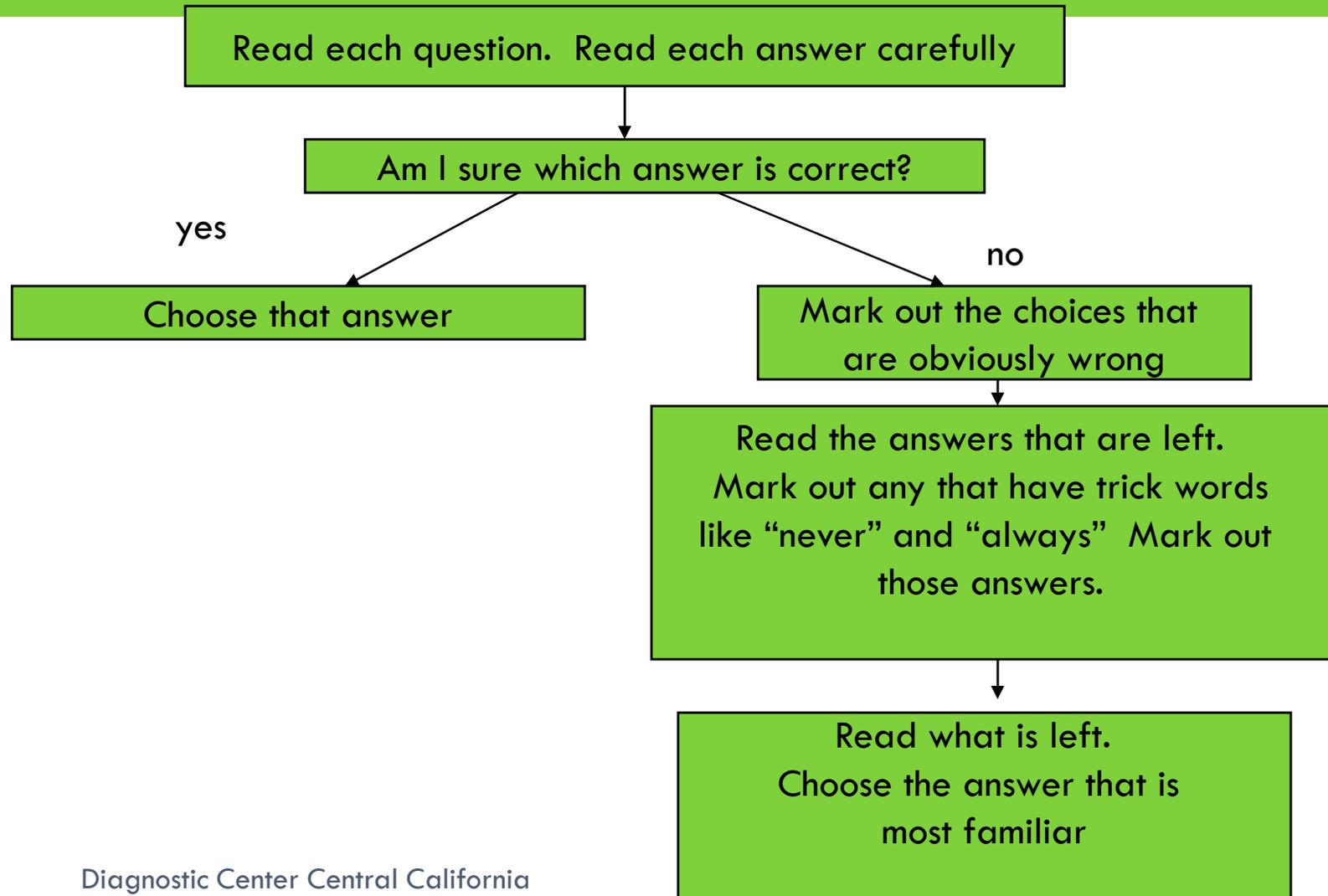
Executive Function Support

- **Have the student keep a notebook or filebox of helpful strategies. Teach how to look for a strategy that might help for a specific assignment.**

Teach the concept of “Zoom in-Zoom out”

- **Zoom in is looking at details.**
- **Zoom out is looking at big picture.**

□ Teach algorithms. Ex: multiple-choice questions



Supporting Initiation

- **Increase organization around the task.**
- **Rehearsal (role playing)**
- **Create an “expectation of initiation”**
 - ▣ **Time timer**
 - ▣ **Coaching the first problem, sentence, etc.**
 - ▣ **Proximity**



General Classroom Supports

Considerations for assignments



- Does it need to be more visually clear?**
- Are the directions explicit?**
- Does the content need to be simplified?**
- Does the amount of content need to be reduced?**
- Does the method of recording responses need to be changed?**

Example of an explicit assignment

Folder 2 (science)

Complete the following steps. REMEMBER to cross off each step as you complete it.

- 1. Read all of the directions first-(read the directions ONLY, then go back to number 2 and do what it says)**
- 2. Read pages 34-38 in your book, “Airplanes of World War II”**
- 3. Write 2 paragraphs about the information you read in the book. Each paragraph should have 5 sentences.**
- 4. When you have finished writing, put your paper in the “finished assignments” bin on Mrs. Mates desk.**
- 5. Check in your notebook for what is next on your daily schedule.**

Supports for Instructions and Testing

- **Written instructions above and beyond those for peers:**
 - **Does student need a written list for each assignment that concretely shows the sequence of steps?**
 - **Does the list need to include organizational assistance (“get the ‘precipitation’ worksheet from your science folder”, or “use pages 12-15 for this assignment”)**
- **Highlight words in a unit, in problems, in text to assure recognition of the most relevant information**

Additional Classroom Ideas



- **If it is important, make it concrete and visual**
- **Use his special interests when possible**
- **Allow student to use his own methods when possible (and effective)**
- **Use timers**
- **Use speaking ball or object**

Additional Classroom Ideas

- **Always use teacher selected groups**
- **Give plenty of “think time” after you ask a question**
- **Encourage mistakes**
- **Keep the flow in information between home and school open**
- **If child talks to himself as he works, encourage “whispered thoughts”**
- **Create a code for asking for help**