



Developing/Aiding Working Memory Skills in Your Student

What is Working Memory?

“Working memory is a system for temporarily storing and managing the information required to carry out complex cognitive tasks such as learning, reasoning, and comprehension.” This simply means working memory is the ability to hold information in our minds for a short amount of time (memory part) in order to accomplish something (working part). Here are a few examples of when you use working memory:

- Mental Math- Find the sum of these 3 numbers 12, 34, 57. In order to solve this problem you must remember those numbers (memory) and recall the mathematical arithmetic used to find the sum (working).
- Verbal instructions- When given verbal instructions you must remember them (memory) while completing the task. (working)

Why is Working Memory Important?

Working memory is crucial for success in school and life. This function aids in many tasks such as accessing prior information, remembering instructions, reasoning, comprehension, focusing, and learning. Working memory is also considered a predictor of an individual's reading comprehension. Although some students have limitations to their working memory capacity, there are strategies to develop and aid student's working memory skills. Such as:

- Learn/ teach memory strategies
 - Make lists- When studying or taking notes try to make categorized lists to help you remember information
 - Summarizing- Listen for key words and write them down when note taking
 - Mnemonic memory techniques- such as making an acronym, a story, or relating it to something to help you remember it. (these are listed on the college and careers page located on the school website)
 - Rehearse- repeating information can help you remember it until you have a chance to write it down or accomplish the task.
- Play games that improve working memory skills such as cards, memory games, “find the difference” picture puzzles, and/or apps for working memory training.
- Break down detailed instructions into tasks for your student
- Manage distractions when learning- the less distractions there are, the more your students can concentrate when using memory strategies.

