

P-6: Plan classroom procedures that maximize learning time

Common Areas of Classroom Inefficiency: Potential “Dead Time” (Secondary)

Potential “Dead Time”:	Considerations:	Sample Strategies for Your Classroom:
Absent or Tardy Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you clearly and efficiently communicate to absent students what work/assignments they missed? • How can you avoid having to individually meet with previously absent students to explain what they’ve missed? • Does your school have a tardy policy? • Will your procedure for tardiness vary based on how many minutes a student is tardy? • Will your procedure for tardiness vary based on a student’s explanation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a mailbox or folder for each student where they place handouts for absent students. • Hole-punch all handouts and have students keep individual notebook for class where they archive all worksheets, homework, notes and warm-ups. Keep a personal copy of The Notebook on your desk. As you keep a copy of all handouts, test review hints, visual aides and detailed homework directions in The Notebook, students who are absent can go to this central place to find out what they missed. • Number homework assignments, so if a student is missing an assignment, you can say, “you are missing assignment number 6,” instead of saying, “you are missing the assignment where we had to graph the results of our most recent lab.” • If a student comes is tardy, that student must sign in upon entering the classroom. Student must then turn in note from parent/ guardian/doctor explaining lateness to the Teacher’s Inbox. Student will quietly get settled and prepare to join the class in the in-progress activity. • Sample policy: “If you are tardy, you are to quietly enter the room and immediately take your assigned seat. Quickly and quietly get out your supplies and begin working. You can catch up on the notes or the Do Now later in the class period. The goal is not to disrupt the class when you enter.”
New Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you help acclimate new students to your classroom as quickly as possible? • What will you do the moment a new student arrives in order to keep the rest of the class running? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create ten “New Student Kits” before the school year begins. Then, when a new student joins the class, welcome them warmly and ask them to review and fill out the materials in the kit. This gives the new student something to do until you can carve out time to meet with the student individually. • The New Student Kit might contain a letter of welcome, a letter for the student to take home to her family, a student interest survey, a student information sheet, the rules and procedures of the classroom, and any other essential reading or forms that other students received at the beginning of the year. • Assign a “buddy” who is responsible for familiarizing the new student with the procedures of the classroom and introducing her to her classmates.
Attendance and Lunch Count	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When should you take attendance? • What activities can take place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handle attendance while students are involved in an instructional task (writing in a journal, silently reading, etc. – “Do Now,” “Warm-Up,” “Focus”

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	<p>simultaneous with attendance-taking?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What if students come in repeatedly late? • What if students are repeatedly absent? • How will you efficiently get a count of the number of students who will be having the school lunch on a given day? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a seating chart and put it inside a plastic page protector. They quickly scan for empty seats and mark the chart with an overhead transparency pen. • If students keep an in-class 3-ring binder, have them put their names on the spine. As they enter the class and take their binder from the shelf, you will quickly see who is absent, as binders of absent students will be left on the shelf. • Sample Policy: “It is your responsibility to check the absence binder on the day you return to copy down the assignments done in class. You will raise your hand and hold up 2 fingers to let the teacher know you need to check the book.” • “Hire” a student and put him in charge of counting the number of students who are having the school lunch
<p>Students Who Finish Early</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will students do when they finish work early? • Will there be interest driven activities? • Will students have the option to read? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an “If You Finish Early...” poster that has a number of activities students can do independently if they complete the assignment before others are ready to move on to the next stage of the lesson (1. Read your independent reading book, 2. Study your vocabulary words, 3. Write Ms. Park a letter that explains one thing you really like about the class and one thing you would like to improve, 4. Draw a picture/comic strip that represents something you’ve learned in the past week, 5. Begin working on your homework if you understand the assignment). • Keep copies of kid-friendly magazines or puzzles on hand • Create a list of things students can do if they finish early. Reading your independent reading book will always be an option; there will also be extension activities for each lesson (differentiated instruction). • Sample policy: “If you finish your work early and have checked it over several times, you have several options. These options include: silent reading (either your own book or a book from the class library), completing your homework, skill building worksheets, or working on your science fair project.”
<p>Unplanned Interruptions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will your students do if you are suddenly called down to the office and an aide takes over your class? • What about if you need to speak to someone at the door for 20 seconds? • What will your students do during a PA announcement? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for students to begin work on a particular independent reading assignment whenever the activity at hand is interrupted. • Plan to implement “sponge activities” – see examples below • If the loudspeaker goes off in class, everyone in the room will freeze what they are doing and listen to the announcement. If the phone rings or the teacher has to talk with someone who comes to the door, students will be allowed to talk to their neighbor in 3-inch voices (asking each other questions about the material) until the teacher comes back. Any visitors who

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		<p>come to observe the class (parents, PD, principal, DOE employees, etc.) will be directed to the visitor's table and class will continue without interruption. Students will not interact with a person seated at the visitor's table unless directed to do so by the teacher.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample Policy: "When an announcement is made over the intercom, you are to stop working and listen to the entire announcement. You are not to speak, whisper, or ask a question until the announcement is finished. If you do talk, you will receive a consequence. Announcements are filled with important information that everyone in the school must hear."
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Sponge Activities

Sponge activities fill small instructional openings and serve as quick ways to review material or engage students in creative thinking. Sponge activities can productively use time that might otherwise be wasted – the few minutes before class begins, before going to recess or lunch, during transitions – provided that the activity is related to the objectives you are working on. In addition, sponge activities are effective management tools that can ensure smooth transitions and reduce the opportunity for student misbehavior.

Below are some general activities you can draw on, with examples from varied grade levels. For all these examples, you will need to tailor the content of your sponge activity to your curriculum – either what you are working on right now, or things from earlier in the year that would benefit from reinforcement.

<p>Minute Mysteries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A father and his son are involved in a car accident. The father is killed and the son is in critical condition. When the boy arrives at the hospital, the doctor in the emergency room exclaims, "I can't operate on this boy, he is my son!" How can this be? (the doctor is his mother) • Ted and Alice are on the floor dead. Nearby is a puddle of water and broken glass. George is asleep on the couch. What happened? (Ted and Alice are fish. George the cat knocked the fish bowl over) • The man who makes it sells it. The man who buys it doesn't need it. The man who needs it doesn't care. What is it? (A coffin) • How far can a bear run into the forest? (halfway, then it's running out again) • Which has a greater mass, an ounce of feathers or an ounce of gold? (they are both an ounce) 	<p>Thinking Games and Minute Mysteries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What comes next in this series...3, 9, 81? • ABC game - First person makes a sentence that begins with an "A", second person builds on the story and begins the next sentence with a "B", and so on... • "I Spy" - who can find something in the room that starts with the letter M, P, S, etc.? • Who am I? (guessing famous people) • What is the popular phrase represented in these boxes (books of these are available at most teacher supply stores): <table border="0" data-bbox="1071 1299 1953 1477"> <tr> <td data-bbox="1071 1299 1312 1396"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">You Just Me</div> </td> <td data-bbox="1375 1299 1596 1396"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">1. TIMING 2. TIMING</div> </td> <td data-bbox="1669 1299 1953 1396"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">My own heart a person</div> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1071 1421 1333 1477"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">(Just between you and me)</div> </td> <td data-bbox="1375 1421 1596 1477"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">(split second timing)</div> </td> <td data-bbox="1669 1421 1953 1477"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">(a person after my own heart)</div> </td> </tr> </table>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">You Just Me</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">1. TIMING 2. TIMING</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">My own heart a person</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">(Just between you and me)</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">(split second timing)</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">(a person after my own heart)</div>
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<p>Mental Math:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What number comes before/after 46, 52, 13, etc.? • Count to 100 by 2's, 5's, 10's, etc. • Flash card relays with math facts ("Around the World") • Name the factors of 120 • Name all prime numbers between 50 and 10 • What is the volume of this soda can if it has a height of X inches, a circumference of Y inches, and a diameter of Z inches? 	<p>Listing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List words that rhyme with the word on the board. • List words with the same long or short vowel sound. • List as many states as you can. • List as many nouns in the room as you can. • List the elements of the periodic table. • List as many formulas related to mass as you can. • List as many bones in the human body as you can.
<p>Classification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which habitat does this animal inhabit? • Which phylum (class, order) etc. does this animal belong to? • What spelling rule do these words support (or contradict)? 	<p>Power-Write:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjectives that begin with each letter in your name. • A group story, where everyone contributes a sentence. • A "mad lib" using the appropriate parts of speech.