

What is an “I am working for board?”

An “I am working for board” is a visual token reward system that shows a student what item or activity they are working for and how many tokens they must earn before receiving it.

The creation of the actual board is simple. The examples below show an area for a picture of the reinforcer and an area for the required number of tokens. This board is often laminated to decrease wear and tear. After creating the board, the student selects what he/she will be working for from a “choice board.” This choice board contains pictures of preferred items and activities. For some students, a picture is not enough so they may be choosing from the actual item(s). The teacher and student then agree upon what must happen to receive a token. This is often based on the occurrence of a desired behavior. This means that a student will receive a token each time the target/desired behavior is displayed. Common examples include completing tasks and following class rules or a specific rule during a specified time period. Next, the teacher determines the number of times the identified behavior will occur before the student receives the identified reinforcer. For example, the teacher may decide that the student will receive one token for each assignment completed. The student needs 3 tokens to receive his reinforcer. Once the third token is earned, the student is able to draw (his chosen reinforcer) for 2 minutes before returning to work. The system now starts over, and the student will continue to work for more tokens.

Token images include stars, check marks, pictures related to their preferred interest(s), or something that relates to the reinforcer they are working for (lego piece, picture of the puzzle they chose, title of the book they are working for). You can also use plastic coins, bingo chips, game pieces, etc. as tokens. You will want to use whatever is most motivating to the student. It is important to note that a token system is not appropriate for all students as some have difficulty making the connection between earning tokens and receiving a reinforcer. Others may have difficulty with delayed reinforcement. It may be necessary to lower the number of tokens required to one or two to help students learn/understand this system.

In summary, an “I am working for board” is a reinforcement system that visually represents how much of a behavior must occur before a reward is given.

