



SEPAC

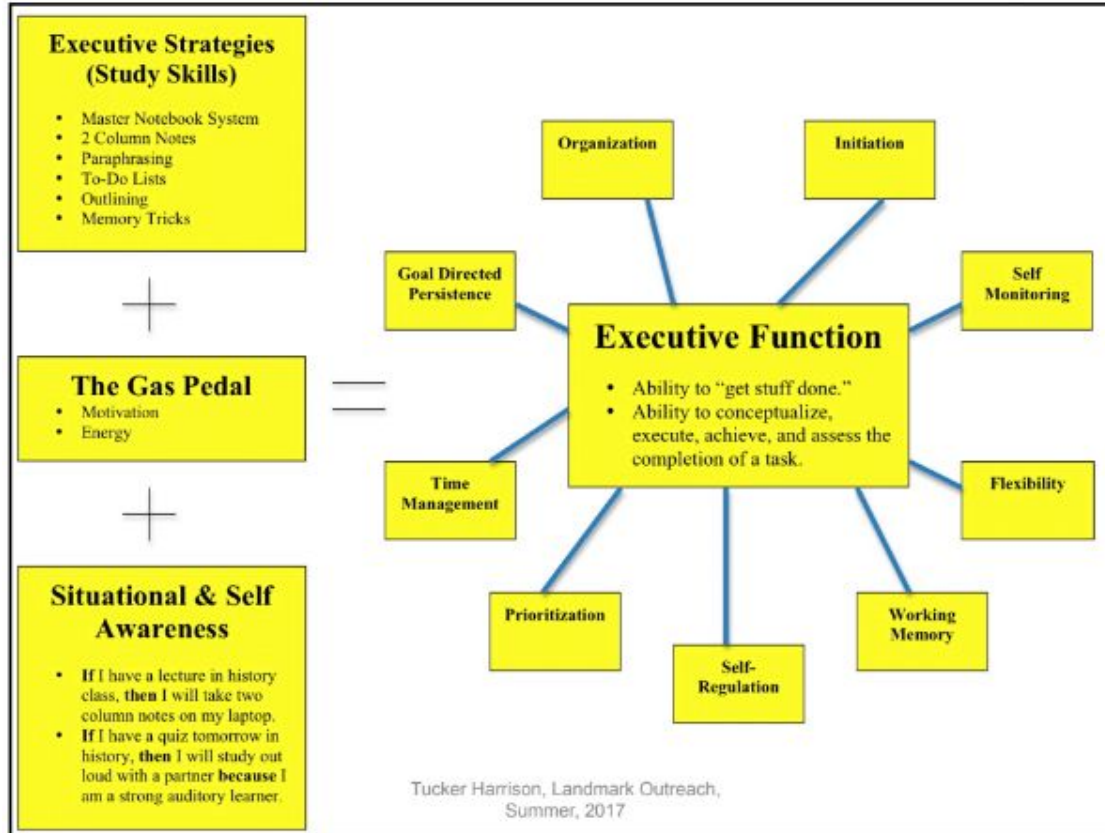
Executive Functioning

Presentation

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What are Executive Functioning skills?



The Brain



- Prefrontal cortex
 - The part responsible for time management, organization, study skills
 - Not fully developed until early 20's
 - EF skills can improve faster with taught strategies

Make it individualized



- Figure out how each person's brain works and which strategies suit them
 - E.g., technology vs. no technology (paper planner vs. app)
- Determine your child's learning style and preferred study strategy
- Metacognition- encourage your child to reflect on their strategies and make changes as needed

Executive Functioning at Cohasset Public Schools



Joseph Osgood and Deer Hill

- MTSS reviews implementation of DCAP
- Posted visual schedules
- Checklists
- Graphic organizers
- Zones of Regulation curriculum
- Size of My Problem scale
- Social Thinking curriculum
- Consultation with related service providers (OT, SAC)
- Sensory Pathways
- Flexible and alternative seating
- Peer modeling
- Desk organizers
- Visual models of end product
- Working clocks and Time Timers
- May Do/Must Do lists
- Agendas in 4th and 5th grade
- Home-school communication

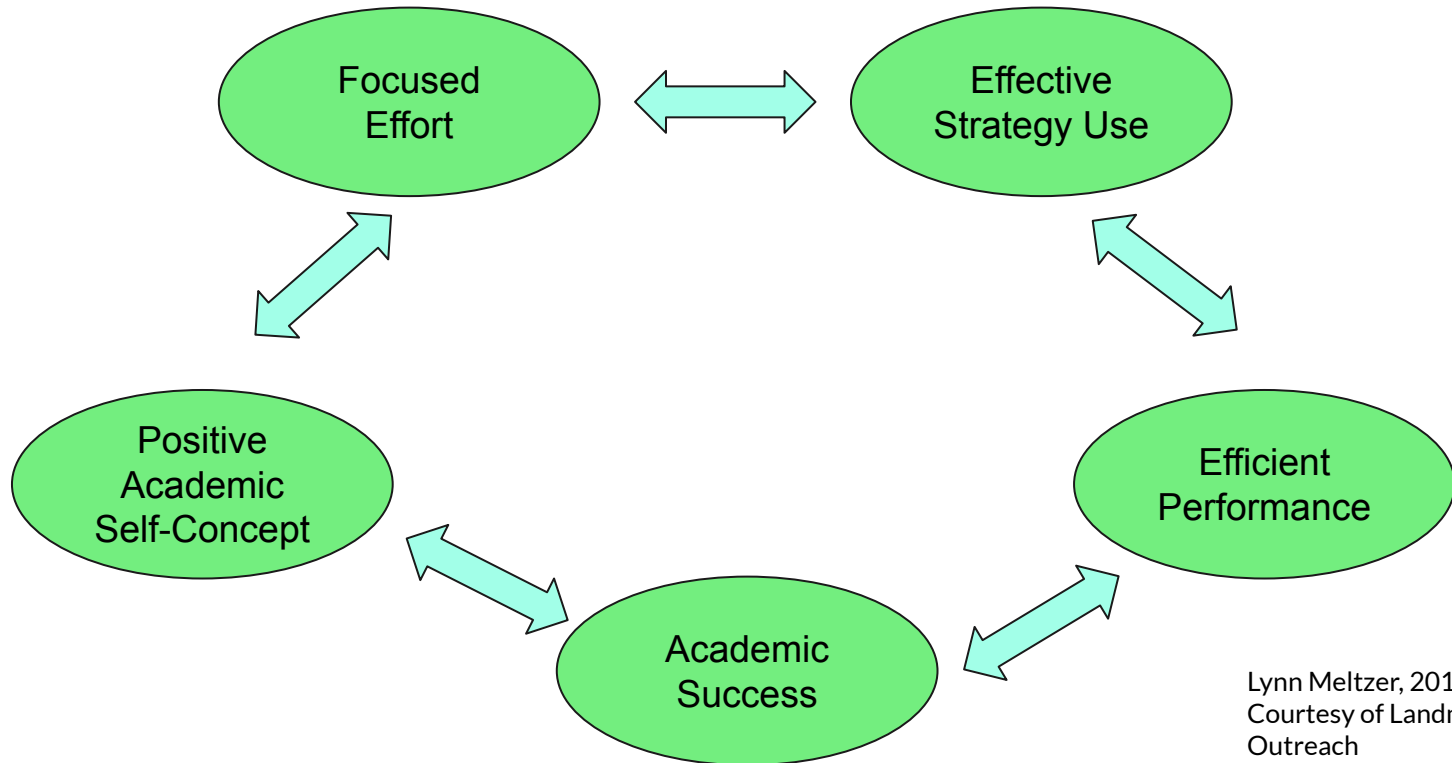
Cohasset Middle School and Cohasset High School

- Embedded into coursework through CPS
- How to study for finals for 9th grade
- Tier 2 EF group at the Middle and High Schools
- Guidance Workshops for goal setting
- Some teachers may use:
 - Self-evaluations
 - Direct instruction in study skills and strategies
 - Time management activities
 - Strategic planning
- Embedded into grade level utility period at Middle School
 - Agenda planning and completion
 - Weekly Aspen Check and WIN forms (What I Need)

Vicious Cycle I



Academic Success Cycle



Lynn Meltzer, 2010
Courtesy of Landmark
Outreach

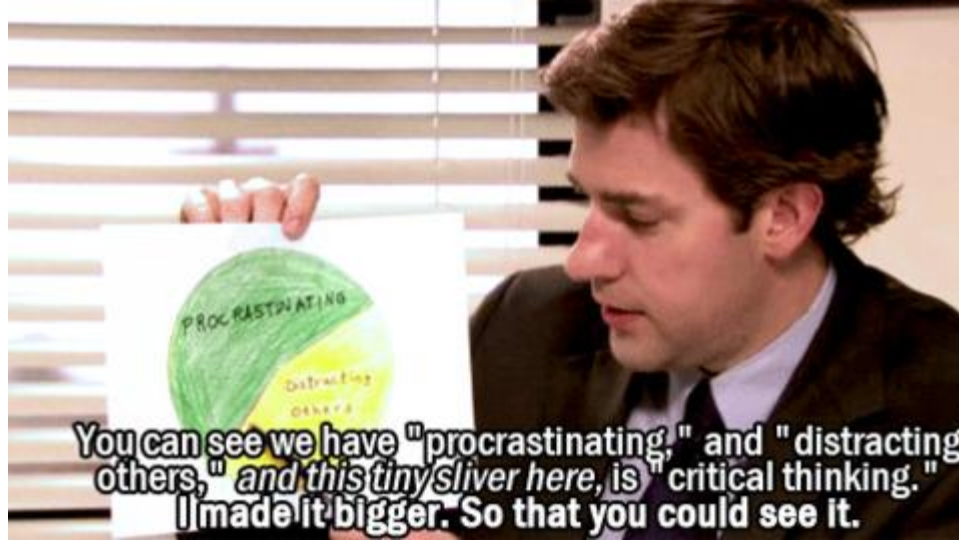
Strategies for Organization



- Have a designated homework/study area with minimal distractions
- Use a specific system to organize notes and materials for classes (digital and paper)
- Color code by subject (digital and paper)
- Use a note-taking system that is effective for the subject matter in each class
 - Know when to type notes and when to hand write them (e.g., math vs. history)
 - Annotate textbooks with post-its
- Go through notes and highlight/underline key information
- When studying, color code notes based on level of understanding

Strategies for Task Initiation and Completion

- 5 minute goals
- Set up small rewards for completing each step of a task (e.g., a brief YouTube video)
- Make a checklist -it's always fun and motivating to check things off!



Strategies for Self-Monitoring



- Check in with your child at timed intervals to ensure that they are not getting stuck
 - Set a timer to break up length of tasks, take a brain break
- Encourage your child to ask for help when they are stuck
- Have your child rate their understanding of a topic
- 60 second summaries

Strategies for Cognitive Flexibility

- Try small changes at first to encourage a shifting mindset
- Use a growth mindset instead of a fixed mindset
 - The Power of Yet
- View the start of a new term as starting with a clean slate
 - Start with a 0, earn your way to an A
- Encourage your student to try new strategies and assess their effectiveness



Practice Cognitive Flexibility with Games!

- Checkers
- Chess
- Jenga
- Linkee
- Kerplunk
- Zeus on the Loose
- Apples to Apples
- Set



Strategies for Memory



- Very little information fits into short term memory
 - On average, 7 items for no more than 20-30 seconds
- Try strategies to transfer information from short term to long-term memory
 - Handwrite information
 - Use memory tricks
 - Mnemonics, word associations, turning it into a song (ABC's), drawing it out, acronyms, 60 second summaries, etc.
 - Make your own quizlet
 - Use multi-modal learning strategies (visual, auditory, physical, etc.)

More Strategies for Memory

- Your brain encodes information while you sleep
 - Cramming/staying up all night does not work
- Frequent short periods of studying beforehand are most effective
- Take breaks to let your brain absorb and process info
 - 1 hour study, 5-10 minutes break, 1 hour study, etc.
 - A good night's sleep and breakfast make a big difference
- Simply re-reading your notes does not work (Recognition vs. recall)
- You know it when you can teach it to others and generalize

Strategies for Self-Regulation

- Mindfulness
- Use an app to block access to apps on phone (Snapchat, Instagram, etc.), reward yourself with access
 - E.g., Freedom, Forest (Both apps that block other apps to increase productivity)
 - Preparing for finals ahead of time reduces anxiety
 - Take brain breaks
 - https://www.edutopia.org/blog/brain-breaks-focused-attention-practices-lori-desautels?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=socialflow

Strategies for Prioritization

- Prioritize subjects
 - Prioritize assignments and assessments in order by calendar and by difficulty (this is individual!)
 - Prioritize information within each subject
 - Use study guides, chapter headings in books, notes
 - Use prior tests to guide studying! (they have the important info)
 - Understand why you got information wrong AND still study what you got correct (you may forget information)
 - Use your teachers' office hours

More Strategies for Prioritization

- Use a tool that helps you identify what information to start with
 - Highlight information that you do not know, or even may not remember in one color
 - Use another color to highlight what you kind of know
 - Use a third color to highlight what you do know
 - Study the unknown information first, then familiar! Don't waste time on what you know, unless you need positive reinforcement
- Other factors to consider:
 - Current grade
 - Weight of the assignment
 - Any other assignments in that class that may be worth more

Strategies for Time Management

- Use a timer to break up study time
- Record any major assignments, projects, papers, and homework
- Record time for sports, eating, sleeping, hanging with friends, etc.
- Schedule small time increments for studying for each class
 - Work for 20-30 minutes at a time, take a break, then study something else

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"I SPENT FIVE HOURS WORKING ON MY REPORT!
ONE HOUR TO GO TO THE MALL FOR AN INK CARTRIDGE,
TWO HOURS ON HOLD WITH TECH SUPPORT, 45 MINUTES
LOOKING FOR A SHEET OF WHITE PAPER, 30 MINUTES
SEARCHING FOR THE PERFECT FONT..."

Strategies for Goal-Directed Persistence



- Set SMART goals
 - Specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, timely
- Break goals into steps and set timelines
- Track progress toward achievement
- Make adjustments as necessary

Five Bold Steps Vision



Recommendations



- Intentionally practice executive functioning skills separate from academic tasks.
- Marie Kondo
- Cooking recipes- gather ingredients and supplies first, follow steps in order.
- Estimate how long tasks around the house will take, time them, and measure the difference (and describe why they differed)
- Have the student plan a trip (figure out travel time, packing list, activities to do)
- Redecorate/reorganize their rooms

Additional Resources



- Crash course in certain topics, including Study Skills (<https://www.thecrashcourse.com/courses>)
- Khan Academy- to review a topic that you need someone else to teach (<https://www.khanacademy.org>)
- *No Mind Left Behind* -Adam J. Cox
- *Your Kid's Gonna Be Okay* -Michael Delman
- *Smart but Scattered* -Peg Dawson and Richard Huare
- *Think Social* -Michelle Garcia Winner