

Finding Focus and Fighting Distraction

Goals

- Identify top academic priorities and distractions
- Create a plan to prevent being distracted from important tasks

Duration

45 minutes to complete

Prerequisites

Completion of the AchieveWorks® Learning & Productivity assessment

Materials and Preparation

Students will need:

- a printout of their AchieveWorks Learning & Productivity report or an Internet-enabled device to view these results online
- copies of the My Distraction Action Plan handout (optional)
- paper and a writing utensil

Please print and modify as needed to use these guided activities with your students. Note, however, that this content, or any portion thereof, may not be copied, distributed, republished, uploaded, posted or transmitted without the express written permission of Human eSources Ltd.

Method

Motivational Set (5 minutes)

1. Show students the “I Spy” image of the toys at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/29233640@N07/7854678628>
2. Ask them to find the following:
 - an Easter Island statue head
 - two Patricks from Spongebob Squarepants
 - a turtle
 - two Barbie heads
 - the number 49
3. Ask students what they noticed first when they started searching for the selected items. What toys drew their attention the most? Was it perhaps the octopus with its long and curved tentacles? Or the smiley face on the bright yellow ball? Or the basketball, because it was so easily identifiable?
4. Next, ask students why they think “I Spy” games are challenging, even if it is only for a few minutes. Why do people enjoy these types of games?
5. Tell students that “I Spy” games are an example of a situation in which distractions can be enjoyable. The goal of these games is to find hidden items amidst a variety of images that are all trying to catch your eye. Distractions can be a problem, though, when we are trying to achieve a goal and our attention shifts away from the task at hand.

Overview

Tell the students they will be reflecting on their top academic priorities and the distractions that are most likely to get in the way of their studies. Students will create a plan to prevent being distracted from important tasks. Students will need to have completed the AchieveWorks Learning & Productivity assessment prior to the activity as they will be examining their preference chart from this report.

Access AchieveWorks Results and the Ideal Setting (10 minutes)

1. Have students access their AchieveWorks Learning & Productivity reports and review their results.
2. Using the preferences in their report, have students write a paragraph describing their ideal work environment. They can write this on the My Distraction Action Plan handout. Ask students to consider this question: if they were working on a stressful school assignment, where would they be working? Would the environment be bright? Are they working in the evening? Is there music playing? What type? Are they eating? Drinking? Encourage students to be as specific as possible.

Distractions (5 minutes)

1. Now have students focus on what distracts them in the learning environment. Have students fill in the My Distractions portion of the handout. While viewing their preference levels, have students find the factors that distract them while they work.
 - For example, if students have a strong preference for bright light, having a low light environment may be a distraction. Or if students prefer working in a warm environment, being cold might be distracting for them.
2. Have students consider their results and each of the factors as they compile the list of their distractions. For each distraction, have students briefly explain why and how this factor diverts their focus.

Distraction Action Plan (20 minutes)

1. Have students identify strategies they could use in order to avoid the distractions they have listed. Students can write these strategies in the Strategies for Prevention box.
 - Encourage students to think about these strategies, as not every one will be as simple as going into a brighter or darker room. Ask students to review their ideal work environment and to use aspects from their explanation in their action plan.
 - Students should also review the information in their AchieveWorks Learning & Productivity report. What recommendations are made in their report? What can they include in their action plan?
2. Next, ask students to list their top academic priorities. What do they want to achieve in school?
3. When students are done, ask them to write how the distractions they've listed will impact these priorities (this can be done on the back of their sheet or on a separate page). What considerations will they have to make when they are doing homework? Completing a class project? Working in a group? Working by themselves? Doing an inquiry report? Doing a highly-structured assignment? Studying at home versus school? Have students write a paragraph or two addressing these concerns and how they plan to avoid them while working.

Closing Activity (5 minutes)

Ask students, when is it important that we focus on distractions? If we are distracted a lot, what could this tell us about ourselves? Ask students to list examples of times at which distractions are good, helpful or beneficial to us. When done, share as a class.

Handout

My Distraction Action Plan

My Ideal Work Environment

My Distractions

Why They are Distractions

Strategies for Prevention

Top Academic Priorities:

How do my distractions impact my academic priorities?

Handout

I Spy... Image



Source: [Robert Couse Baker](#)