

Co-Regulation Planner: Executive Functions to Self-Direction

PURPOSE

Co-regulation is the interactive process of regulatory support between a caring adult and a child that fosters self-regulation development across the lifespan. Adults can provide co-regulatory support for students by becoming attuned to students' developmental range and responding with appropriate scaffolds – both in the moment and over time. Successful co-regulation allows the student to build increasing independence and autonomy as their skills are strengthened. This tool supports educators in planning a co-regulation of skills that build towards self-direction, including executive functions and self-regulation, which help students to organize their thinking and materials, focus, prioritize, think flexibly, and make choices aligned with long-term goals.

Considerations:

- All students, regardless of their developmental starting point, need support for the integrated development of holistic skills. This support should be driven by students' needs and be aligned towards the goal of increased competency, independence, and agency rather than dependency.
- The context and conditions that surround students unlock their potential for self-regulation, executive functions, and self-direction. Asking students to demonstrate these skills without providing safe, culturally-sustaining environments, meaningful learning experiences, and trust-filled relationships may perpetuate inequities by asking students to remain compliant in a system that has not been designed to optimize their development.

Attune to Zone of Proximal Development

DIRECTIONS:

Observe the student in a context where they tend to be more self-directed and independent, and in another context where the student struggles with these skills. Record your notes below.

Observation 1: _____	<p>What specifically is the student being asked to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are the tasks and expectations?</i> <p>How is the student doing with their executive function and self-regulation skills?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Managing emotions/stress? (overcoming setbacks, managing frustration, seeking out supports)</i> • <i>Working memory? (holding information in mind and using it, following multi-step directions)</i> • <i>Thinking flexibly? (trying a new strategy, taking a different perspective, transitioning between settings, or adjusting to different expectations)</i> • <i>Inhibition? (waiting their turn, thinking before speaking or acting, resisting distractions or daydreaming)</i> <p>What is happening in the environment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Who is the student with? What are they doing?</i> • <i>What is happening in the physical space around the student?</i> • <i>What time of day is this?</i>
Observation 2: _____	



Respond with Supports

DIRECTIONS:

Select one or more strategies that can be used with the student **both** proactively and in the moment when needed.

Proactive Supports:	In-the-Moment Supports:
<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive Unloaders (<i>see p. 4</i>) Give student materials that scaffold working memory	<input type="checkbox"/> Metacognitive Language (<i>see p. 5</i>) Incorporate language that prompts students to be aware of, and try out, different types of thinking
<input type="checkbox"/> Minimize Environmental Distractions Reduce extraneous stimuli in the classroom	<input type="checkbox"/> Prompt and Reinforce Student's Use of Strategies Scaffold student's use of proactive strategies with reminders and praise
<input type="checkbox"/> Stress Management Strategies Teach strategies that support stress management	<input type="checkbox"/> Notice and Address Sources of Stress Address student's stress about the task or situation at hand, or stress about other things, to reduce cognitive load
<input type="checkbox"/> Routines and Procedures (<i>see p. 3</i>) Practice simple, predictable, and consistent classroom routines and approaches to tasks	<input type="checkbox"/> Connect to Student's Knowledge and Experience to Decrease Cognitive Load Introduce a new or unfamiliar task or topic by leveraging prior knowledge, culture, and experiences to reduce demands on working memory
<input type="checkbox"/> Address Physical Needs Reduce barriers by ensuring the student's needs for exercise, nutrition, and sleep are met	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Mindfulness Incorporate regular mindfulness practice into daily routines	
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	



Observe

DIRECTIONS:

Once supports have been introduced for a sufficient amount of time, observe the student again, noting what changes you see.

Observation 3: _____



Adjust Supports

DIRECTIONS:

Consider – have the supports been successful?

YES	NO
<input type="checkbox"/> Increase challenge	<input type="checkbox"/> Decrease challenge
<input type="checkbox"/> Increase student autonomy	<input type="checkbox"/> Try new scaffolds
<input type="checkbox"/> Fade supports	<input type="checkbox"/> Reassess underlying causes

Planning Routines

Planning co-regulating routines means they should model and match the level of engagement and energy required for students to meet their goals while providing adequate scaffolds and supports. Use the template below to plan to create co-regulating routines.

Routine:	Steps:	Skill Supports:	Reinforce:
Name the time or activity, and the WHY.	In as few words as possible, list each thing students should do. Directions should be specific, framed in the positive, and be minimally restrictive.	Add supports for skill development as needed.	Consider how to keep the routine going.
Example: <i>Independent Writing</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>At 9:00 am, get your writing folder, notebook, and pencil. Set them at your desk.</i> 2. <i>Review the day's learning objective and writing checklist. Ask any clarifying questions.</i> 3. <i>Set your timer for 25 minutes. It is time to write!</i> 4. <i>Way to go! Set your time for 5 minutes—it is time for your well-earned break.</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/> Schedule <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Checklist <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Countdown timer <input type="checkbox"/> Organized materials <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reduced distractions <input type="checkbox"/> _____	Name the WHY Always connect routines back to co-created norms and expectations, incorporate student voice, and be positively framed.
		<input type="checkbox"/> Schedule <input type="checkbox"/> Checklist <input type="checkbox"/> Countdown timer <input type="checkbox"/> Organized materials <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced distractions <input type="checkbox"/> _____	Model and Practice Give students the chance to see and walk through the routine several times, celebrating successes and making adjustments as needed Ask students to set a goal
		<input type="checkbox"/> Schedule <input type="checkbox"/> Checklist <input type="checkbox"/> Countdown timer <input type="checkbox"/> Organized materials <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced distractions <input type="checkbox"/> _____	Example: "Our goal is to get 10 days of working together to line up in 2 minutes, and we will celebrate with 10 minutes of extra recess." Point out the use of skills in the moment Example: "I see you are really focusing on getting everything you need for school and not getting distracted by your video game – nice job!"
		<input type="checkbox"/> Schedule <input type="checkbox"/> Checklist <input type="checkbox"/> Countdown timer <input type="checkbox"/> Organized materials <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced distractions <input type="checkbox"/> _____	Give increasing autonomy Gradually give fewer reminders, allow students to take on more independence like leading the routine or removing some structure once skills are built.

Mind Master Card (Front)

(Copy Double-Sided, Flip Pages on Long Edge)

PURPOSE

Use these cards to support students' awareness of some of the different types of thinking that can support them as learners.

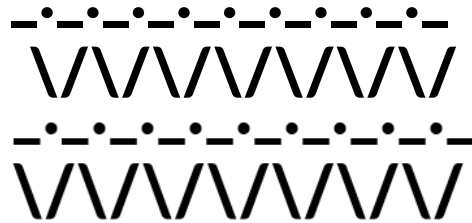
DIRECTIONS:

Print and cut the cards so that the visuals are on one side and correspond with the sentence frames on the other. Use the cards to prompt students to try out different approaches to thinking when they get stuck.

ASK QUESTIONS



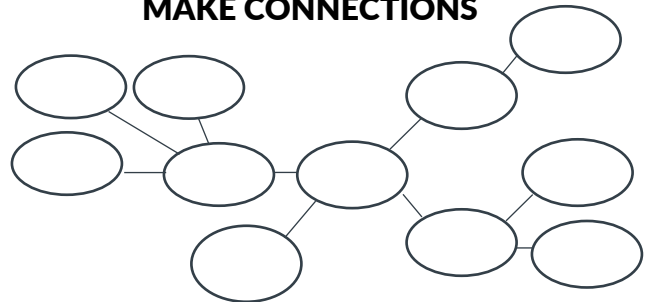
IDENTIFY AND CREATE PATTERNS



DETERMINE IMPORTANCE

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

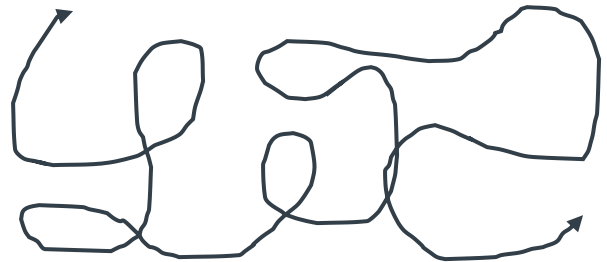
MAKE CONNECTIONS



EVALUATE



THINK FLEXIBLY



CATEGORIZE

CHECK UNDERSTANDING



Mind Master Card (Back)

(Copy Double-Sided, Flip Pages on Long Edge)

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Use these cards to support students' awareness of some of the different types of thinking that can support them as learners.

DIRECTIONS:

Print and cut the cards so that the visuals are on one side and correspond with the sentence frames on the other. Use the cards to prompt students to try out different approaches to thinking when they get stuck.

IDENTIFY AND CREATE PATTERNS

One pattern I am noticing is ...
One idea that repeats is ...
A possible trend is ...
One way we could organize this is ...

ASK QUESTIONS

I am curious why ...
I am wondering what ...
How do you think ...
Does anyone know when ...
Who ...

MAKE CONNECTIONS

This reminds me of when ...
One reason these ideas are connected is ...
I am wondering if what we learned about ... would help us understand ...
This seems [similar to/different than] ...

DETERMINE IMPORTANCE

I think the most important thing/idea is ...
Our top priority should be ...
It is less important to ...
Our first step should be ...

THINK FLEXIBLY

A different way to think about this might be ...
An alternative strategy is ...
Another perspective may be ...
I know the first way we tried did not work. Another approach might be ...

EVALUATE

I think it is a good idea to try ...
I think it is a bad idea to ...
There might be some bad consequences if ...
It might be valuable to ...

CHECK UNDERSTANDING

I know I understand ...
I do not yet understand ...
We know how to ...
One step I am confident about is ...
A step I am not sure about yet is ...

CATEGORIZE

One way to sort is ...
Categories could include ...
Some different types are ...
The groups that I notice are ...
We could sort by ...