Powerful Assessment and Feedback: Using Executive Functions to Unlock Student Potential

Condensed version, adapted from the EF2R Presentation at the SENG, 2015, Gifted Ed Conference in Denver, CO

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Plan for Today’s Talk

Current

GETTING THERE

EF2R

efs2therescue.com
A Short Review of EF
‘Executive functioning’ is an umbrella term for the mental processes used to manage oneself and one’s resources to achieve a goal.
The CURRENT Paradigm
Frustration

Power struggles

Checking out

“Lazy”

Alienation

Loneliness

Giving up
WORLD'S BEST TEACHER

YOU
“You don’t care about school”

“You’re not trying”

“You’re being lazy”

“We expect more”

“You’re wasting your potential”
An EF2R Based Approach
Getting There

1. Student Knowledge of EFs

2. Student Understanding of Own EF Spectrum

3. Student Toolbelt of Strategies

4. Change in the Emphasis of Feedback and Assessment
Getting There
1. Student Knowledge of EFs
The EF2R ‘characters’ are a fabulously popular, imaginative, open-ended, and simple tool to support a whole-school approach to teaching the executive functions.

They are available for purchase at www.EFs2theRescue.com
2. Student (and parent) Understanding of Own EF Spectrum
# Arrival and Transitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>TIME MANAGEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using homework agenda effectively</td>
<td>Arriving at class on time</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Keeping bag and work spaces tidy</td>
<td>Ready to make transitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelly</td>
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<td>Ray</td>
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<td>Sarah</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mohammed</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3. Student Toolbelt of Strategies
Classroom Strategies at a Glance

**Emotional Control**
- Use deep breathing, meditation, exercise
- Listen to upbeat music
- Run, drink water, nutrition
- Try self-talking in a playful voice
- Use ‘worry time’ or a worry box

**Working Memory**
- Ask the teacher to “jot that down, please”
- Write ‘DC’ next to questions you double-check
- Feed information to your ears (auditory strength)
- Feed information to your eyes (visual strength)

**Organization**
- Count the steps across your fingers
- Practice saying first, second, third
- Count the steps across your fingers
- Make a goal for every 5 minutes

**Sustained Attention**
- Find a personal connection to your work
- Say, “We’ll talk more later” to end socializing
- Mirror someone who is steady and calm
- Use noise cancelling headphones
- Sit right at the front
4. Change in the Emphasis of Feedback and Assessment
Learning Behavior

EF Lens
- Behavior is due to particular EF demand
- Feedback that is positive, specific, achievable

Traditional Lens
- Behavior is due to lack of effort or character
- Feedback that is negative, vague, and unproductive
Types of Feedback

Mirroring Feedback
I see you’re managing the organization by making a list.

Mirror + Guiding Feedback
You’re having trouble planning. Let me show you a strategy for that.

Coaching Feedback
What are you struggling with?
What is your strategy for that?
Cognitive Wrappers

- A "wrapper" is an intervention that *surrounds* an existing activity to integrate metacognitive practice.
# Rubric for Crafting an Expository Paragraph

<table>
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<th>Target</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Craft a clear topic sentence</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use three transition words</td>
<td>2+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create three strong supporting sentences</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Wrapped** Rubric for Crafting an Expository Paragraph

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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Use three transition words</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create three strong supporting sentences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tap through and re-read to clarify ideas (Goal-Directed Persistence, Working Memory)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make 5 changes (Cognitive Flexibility)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
For more information and training on how to create powerful wrappers and give positive, specific, and achievable feedback, please contact EFs2theRescue.com.

We give dynamic 1 hour, 1 day, or 2 day workshops. We also do week-long workshop/consultative residencies.
Current → GETTING THERE → EF2R
Knowledge of Tasks, Self, and Thinking

Growth Mindset

Traditional

Knowledge of Tasks

Fixed Mindset

EF