Cognitive Strategies

Description

Cognitive strategies are tools that we all can use to acquire, retain, and apply information. Students who struggle with executive functioning skills like processing, remembering, recalling, and organizing information and materials can benefit from explicit instruction of cognitive strategies as they are learning. The use of cognitive strategies structures the learning of complex tasks for students. Rosenshine (1997) called cognitive strategies procedural prompts because they support learners as they develop internal procedures that enable them to complete complex tasks. As students become independent they can begin to develop their own strategies. There are many types of strategies teachers can use. (e.g. orienting strategies, mnemonics, visualization, rehearsal strategies).

Implementation Tips

The Self-Regulated Strategy Development (The Iris Center, 2013) is a validated framework teachers can utilize to plan cognitive strategies. The following are steps for implementation.

- Identify the area of need and identify a strategy for students to utilize.
- Determine the prerequisite skill(s) students will need to use the strategy and ensure students master those prerequisite skills.
- Discuss with students the reason they need the strategy and make sure they understand how and when to use the strategy. Use meta-cognitive strategies to ensure the student can self-monitor and generalize.
- Model the strategy using a think-aloud so that students know how to perform it and why they need it.
- Have students memorize the strategy and become fluent in utilizing the strategy. Provide visual prompts for students as they are memorizing the strategy.
- Support the use of the strategy by providing prompts to utilize the strategy along with affirmative, and corrective feedback.
- Provide opportunities for students to utilize and generalize the strategies.

Resources

- [Kansas University Special Connections on Cognitive Strategies](#): This page has a full description and example of cognitive strategies.
- [Iris Center Cognitive Processing Strategies:](#) The Iris Center provides examples of cognitive strategies to address memory and self-regulation deficits.
- [CEEDAR Center's High Leverage Practice Video:](#) This video provides guidance on using cognitive and metacognitive strategies as a high-leverage practice.

References

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