



Moving Strategies from Small Groups to Classrooms

Authors: Zona Yong (Occupational Therapist), Siti Nur Riyana (Early Interventionist]
Published: 1st September 2021

Suhailah is a Senior Early Interventionist working in Development Support Plus. We spoke with her to better understand some of the common challenges faced by preschool teachers and several strategies that Suhailah recommends.

Common challenges faced by preschool teachers are...

1. Enforcing classroom rules

2. Burnt out due to overusing their voice

3. Co-teachers with different classroom management style

Common intervention approaches are usually carried out in pull-out or small groups, but these may not be the most ideal in preschool classrooms because...


1. Skills are taught in isolation and in a separate setting

- Approaches and resources used are not consistent with those commonly used in the classroom, where direct instructions are given to the child most of the time.

2. Child may not have the ability to generalise what he/she has learnt

- Child may still require explicit instructions to access the school curriculum in a large group setting and to maintain his/her interest.
- Class teachers may not be able to give the child the one-to-one attention he/she needs during the pull-out session, which will remain a challenge the child has not learnt the skills.

Based on these challenges, we have picked out **five strategies** that worked best for these teachers. These strategies were effective in the classroom because they provided an encouraging environment for the children to communicate, allowing the teachers utilise their voices more efficiently. These strategies also encouraged independence and empowered other children in the classroom to become “little helpers” who reinforced these strategies throughout the day. This resulted in more desirable behaviours in the classroom, benefiting everyone.




The image is a poster titled 'Whole Body Listening'. It features two illustrations of children: one sitting on a chair and another sitting cross-legged on the floor. To the right of the illustrations is a vertical list of ten items, each with a corresponding icon and a label: eyes (looking), ears (listening), mouth (quiet), hands (still), feet (still), body (facing speaker), and brain (thinking). The background is green.

1. Classroom Whole Body Listening Visual

Supporting instructions with visuals helps to provide students with classroom expectations during work time and large group time

Source: <https://br.myboardmaker.com/Activity/20152592>



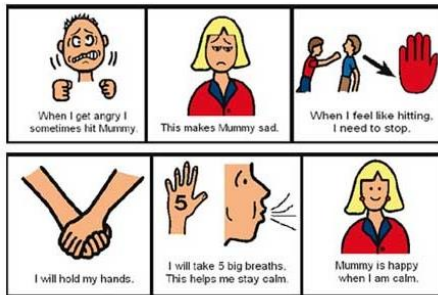
The image shows a set of cue cards for turn-taking. At the top, it says 'Whose turn is next?'. Below this, there are three columns labeled 'First', 'Second', and 'Third'. Under 'First' is a card for 'Jas'. Under 'Second' is a card for 'Ralph'. Under 'Third' is a card for 'Sue'. There are also icons for a 'Computer', a 'Tablet', and an 'Interactive whiteboard'.

2. Turn Taking Cue Cards

Supporting turn taking with a tangible item (e.g. a ‘my turn to talk’ card, a musical instrument, a star) as cue for them to talk or wait for their turn to talk in a large group setting

Source: <https://www.twinkl.com.au/resource/t-s-1263-whose-turn-is-next>

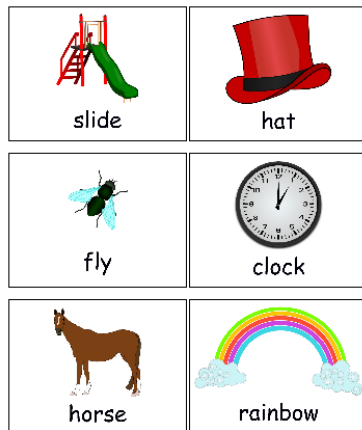
3. Social Stories



Sharing information through a description of events occurring around the subject, and why things happen, through a story encourages positive social relationships. This can be incorporated into reading or circle time for the class. Examples include, “thinking thoughts” and “feeling feelings”

Source: <https://blogs.sd41.bc.ca/lss/resource-centre/visual-supports/social-stories/>

4. Word Recognition



To increase usage of vocabulary words for students who may need more learning opportunities and repetition, a flipping booklet that contains picture word cards of thematic target words were placed in the library corner of the preschool. This benefited the whole class, while targeting students who needed the practice.

Source: <https://playingtots.com/>

5. Making Choices!



Catch them doing good by praising or giving positive encouragement. Highlight good choices made by children in the class to reinforce positive classroom behavior through role play and use of visuals.

Source: <https://www.twinkl.com.sg/resource/t-p-018-new-good-bad-behaviour-flashcards-with-words>