



# How To: Prompt and Reinforce On-Task Behaviors Using Self-Monitoring Checklists

Student self-monitoring can be an effective means to improve general classroom conduct--especially if that intervention:

1. targets positive, replacement behaviors (i.e., behaviors intended to replace problem behaviors);
2. provides a reminder, or prompt, at the precise moment when the student needs to display the positive target behaviors;
3. requires that the student compare and evaluate his or her current behaviors against the positive target behaviors; and
4. is strengthened by teacher praise when the student shows progress with the positive target behaviors.

The self-monitoring intervention presented here promotes student participation and responsible--and is convenient for classroom use (adapted from Whitford, Liaupsin, C. J., Umbreit, & Ferro, 2013).

Two versions of the self-monitoring program appear below. In preparation for using either version, teacher and student will meet to develop a checklist of appropriate, positive behaviors ('replacement behaviors') that the student will use as the self-monitoring tool. A sample set of self-monitoring checklists appears later in this document. A free, online application for creating student self-monitoring checklists can also be accessed at:

<http://www.interventioncentral.org/tools/self-monitoring-checklist-maker>

**Version 1: The student does a pre-session self-prompt and post-session self-evaluation.** Before the self-monitoring session, that student briefly previews the positive behavior targets. After the session, the student reviews the checklist and notes which of the positive behavior targets he or she actually displayed. The teacher then meets briefly with the student, reviews the completed checklist, (1) corrects the student if any of the ratings do not match the teacher's perception of observed behavior, and (2) provides praise if the student hit most or all of the behavior targets or encouragement if the student failed to attain the behavior targets.

**Version 2: The student does a pre-session self-prompt and monitors behaviors periodically during the session.** In preparation for this intervention, the teacher chooses a timing option for the student to use during the self-monitoring phase (e.g., mechanical kitchen timer, smart phone timer application set on vibrate). NOTE: If the student has access to a device that can play MP3 (electronic audio) files, teachers can download a 'beep-tape' with tones at 5-minute intervals that can serve as an ideal signal for student self-monitoring. Those free beep-tapes and instructions for use can be accessed at:

<http://www.interventioncentral.org/free-audio-monitoring-tapes>

The teacher and student also determine a fixed-interval frequency (e.g., every 2 minutes; every 5 minutes) when the student will pause to evaluate and record his or her behavior.

Before the self-monitoring session, the student briefly previews the positive behavior targets. During the self-



monitoring session, the student pauses at the end of each interval (e.g., whenever the timer sounds or the beep-tape signals), the student reviews the checklist and records which of the positive behavior targets he or she actually displayed during the most recent interval. The student then resets the timer--if necessary-- and continues the activity.

At the end of the session, the teacher meets briefly with the student to review the self-monitoring results. The instructor reviews the interval ratings, (1) corrects the student if any of the ratings do not match the teacher's perception of observed behavior, and (2) provides praise if the student hit most or all of the behavior targets or encouragement if the student failed to attain the behavior targets.

## Reference

Whitford, D. K., Liaupsin, C. J., Umbreit, J., & Ferro, J. B. (2013). Implementation of a single comprehensive function-based intervention across multiple classrooms for a high school student. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 36, 147-167.



## Student Self-Monitoring Checklists

Here are sample items for a student's classroom self-monitoring checklist.

Checklist Item
<b>AT THE START OF CLASS:</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> I have a sharpened pencil.
<input type="checkbox"/> I have a pen.
<input type="checkbox"/> I have paper for taking notes.
<input type="checkbox"/> I have my homework ready to turn in.
<input type="checkbox"/> I have put my cell phone away in my backpack.
<input type="checkbox"/> I have closed up my backpack and placed it on the floor.
<input type="checkbox"/> I have cleared my desk of unneeded materials.
<input type="checkbox"/> I am sitting quietly.
<input type="checkbox"/> I am working on the assigned start-of-class activity.
<b>WHEN THE TEACHER IS TALKING:</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> I am looking at the teacher.
<input type="checkbox"/> I am not talking to other students.
<input type="checkbox"/> I am sitting up straight.
<input type="checkbox"/> I raise my hand and wait to be called on to comment or ask a question.
<input type="checkbox"/> I ask questions if I don't understand what is being taught.
<input type="checkbox"/> To avoid distracting myself or others, I do not play with objects at my desk.
<b>WHEN TOLD TO TAKE NOTES:</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> I am sitting up straight.
<input type="checkbox"/> I am looking at the board or at the teacher.
<input type="checkbox"/> I am listening to the teacher's presentation.
<input type="checkbox"/> I am writing down my notes.
<input type="checkbox"/> I am not talking to other students.
<input type="checkbox"/> To avoid distracting myself or others, I do not play with objects at my desk.
<b>WHEN WORKING WITH OTHER STUDENTS:</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> I am talking only with my work partners.
<input type="checkbox"/> I participate in discussion with my partners.
<input type="checkbox"/> I do my share of the work when in pairs or groups.
<input type="checkbox"/> I do my share of the work when in pairs or groups.



<input type="checkbox"/> I talk only about the topic(s) assigned by the teacher.
<input type="checkbox"/> I keep my voice level down so that I don't distract other students.
<input type="checkbox"/> I seek help from my partners if I don't understand something.
<input type="checkbox"/> I ask the teacher for help if my partners cannot answer my question.
<b>WHEN WORKING ON AN INDEPENDENT ASSIGNMENT:</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> I am sitting up straight.
<input type="checkbox"/> I have cleared my desk of unneeded materials.
<input type="checkbox"/> I am working on the assignment.
<input type="checkbox"/> I am not talking to other students.
<input type="checkbox"/> To avoid distracting myself or others, I do not play with objects at my desk.
<input type="checkbox"/> I ask my neighbor if I have a question about the assignment.
<input type="checkbox"/> I ask the teacher if I still have a question about the assignment.
<input type="checkbox"/> I use any extra time when I have finished the assignment to check my work.
<b>WHEN TAKING A QUIZ OR TEST:</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> I look over the test at the start to decide how much time to spend on each section.
<input type="checkbox"/> I am giving my full attention to working on the test.
<input type="checkbox"/> I am not talking to other students.
<input type="checkbox"/> I use any extra time when I have finished the test to check my answers.
<b>WHILE TRAVELING THROUGH HALLWAYS:</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> When in a group, I walk in single-file.
<input type="checkbox"/> When in a group, I look straight ahead.
<input type="checkbox"/> When in a group, I keep my hands to myself.
<input type="checkbox"/> When in a group, I am not talking to other students.
<input type="checkbox"/> When alone, I go straight to my destination.
<input type="checkbox"/> When alone, I do not stop to chat with others that I meet.
<b>WHEN ENTERING THE ROOM DURING CLASS:</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> I enter quietly and walk directly to my seat without drawing attention to myself.
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not talk to other students.
<input type="checkbox"/> I take out my work materials.
<input type="checkbox"/> I immediately join the learning activity.
<input type="checkbox"/> I seek help from my neighbor if I don't understand what activity I am supposed to be doing.
<input type="checkbox"/> I seek help from the teacher if I still don't understand what activity I am supposed to be doing.



<b>WHEN LEAVING THE ROOM DURING CLASS:</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> I have informed my teacher in advance of my reason for leaving class.
<input type="checkbox"/> I put away all work materials.
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not talk to other students.
<input type="checkbox"/> I leave my seat and exit the room quietly and without drawing attention to myself.
<b>AT THE END OF CLASS:</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> I am not talking to other students.
<input type="checkbox"/> I check that I have written down the homework assignment correctly and completely.
<input type="checkbox"/> I put all work materials needed for homework into my backpack.
<input type="checkbox"/> I clear my desk or other workspace.
<input type="checkbox"/> I put all classroom materials back in their proper place.
<input type="checkbox"/> I wait to be dismissed by the teacher before leaving the classroom.