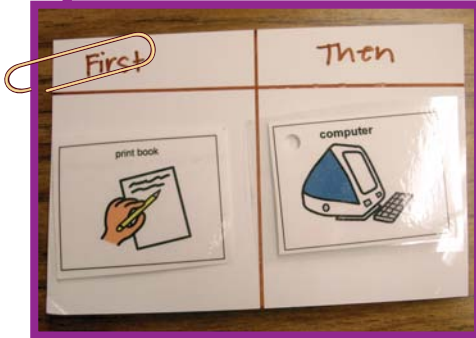


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First/Then Board



Materials

- Computer
- Printer
- Construction paper or tagboard
- Laminate
- Hook-and-loop tape



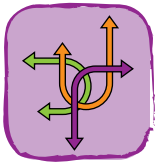
Description

A *First/Then Board* is a mini-schedule that is portable and can be used to provide more choices to a student or to reinforce simple instructions. The teacher places a word or picture of what the student has to do under the FIRST (left) section of the card. For the THEN (right) side of the card, the student might choose a preferred activity to engage in for a short period of time or the teacher can select something he or she feels the learner will enjoy or appreciate.

The teacher can create the cards with pictures and words, or just words (use any graphics program or the Internet Picture Dictionary listed under Web Sites to find free, usable images).

The First/Then Board and the picture or word cards should be laminated to be used many times throughout the school day.

While First/Then Boards are most often used to provide balance for students and to give them choices throughout the day, they can also be used when a teacher wants to remind a student of two tasks that must be completed in a row. First/Then Boards are helpful for many reasons. They can relieve student anxiety about the schedule; they help teachers avoid repeating a lot of unnecessary verbal instructions; and they can help to ease transitions. Some teachers even choose to use them for the entire class instead of only for individual learners because they can cut down on schedule-related questions such as, “What are we doing next?” and “What can we do when we finish?”



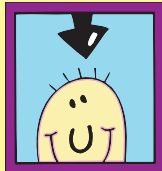
Directions

Using thick paper or tagboard, print out a two-column, two-row table on the computer (or simply create your board and your columns using a thick magic marker). Label the first column “FIRST” and the second column “THEN.” Then, use clip art, any graphics program, photos, or illustrations to create cards for activities, tasks, or jobs the student has to engage in, enjoys, and might want to try. Finally, attach hook and loop tape to the back of each card and on each side of the First/Then Board.



Example

Chad, a first grader with an emotional disability, finds center work very overwhelming. There are many different activities, and he prefers some (e.g., listening station) over others (e.g., writing station, letters/sounds station). To motivate Chad to try different centers, the teacher places her center choice under the “First” space (e.g., letters/sounds station), and Chad places his choice under the “Then” space (e.g., listening station).



Keep in Mind

A First/Then Board is often the first schedule that a student will use. As the student learns this concept, you can easily begin to add more choices or pictures to this board, thus creating a visual schedule for the individual. These are also great for parents who are having difficulty getting a child to sit down for homework.



References/ Recommended Reading

Breitfelder, L.M. (2008). Quick and easy adaptations and accommodations for early childhood students. *TEACHING Exceptional Children Plus*, 4(5). Retrieved July 3, 2009, from <http://escholarship.bc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1151&context=education/tecplus>

Marks, S.U., Shaw-Hegwer, J., Schrader, C., Longaker, T., Peters, I., Powers, F., et al. (2003). Instructional management tips for teachers of students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 35(4), 50–55.



Vendor

Clipart.com

<http://www.clipart.com>

For a weekly, monthly, or annual subscription fee, you can get a huge range of images that can be used for your adaptations.



Web Sites

The Behavior Guy

<http://thebehaviorguy.com/2008/07/14/14readymade-if-then-board>

Web site of Darren Tagliarini, a behavior specialist. Scan the site for many classroom management resources including an If/Then Board example.

The Picture Dictionary

<http://www.pdictionary.com>

Use the flash cards section to print images in several different categories such as musical instruments, school, and sports.

Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention

http://challengingbehavior.org/do/resources/teaching_tools/ttyc_toc.htm

The “Teacher Tools” page of this web site contains directions not only for making a First/Then Board but also for creating at least a dozen other supports for students with learning and social needs.

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