

Executive Functions (Part 1): Understanding Why Some Students Struggle

Use this outline to follow along with the module's main features. The blank "Notes" panels below each section are interactive and can be filled in using Adobe Acrobat. Otherwise, print this document and record your notes by hand.

Module Home

- **Module Description:** This module explores executive functions and explains why many students struggle with cognitive processes related to learning. It then examines why it's critical for teachers to explicitly teach these students when, where, and how to use effective study strategies to help them succeed academically (est. completion time: 1 hour).
- *STAR Legacy Cycle*
- **Related to This Module**
 - Link: Module Outline
 - Video: Navigating an IRIS *STAR Legacy* Module
 - Link: IRIS and Adult Learning Theory
 - Wrap-Around Content Map

Challenge

- **Video:** Hi, I'm Gina. I'm a student at Morrison High School, and this is my class project: A day in the life of my school. Unfortunately, it's not exactly how I hoped it would turn out. The morning I took pictures at school, all of my best friends were talking about the exact same thing: Studying.

Notes

Initial Thoughts

- Why do some students struggle with learning and completing tasks?
- How can teachers effectively teach study skills strategies?

Notes



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Perspectives & Resources

Module Objectives

- After completing the entire Perspectives & Resources section and reviewing the accompanying activities, you should be able to:
 - Understand why some students struggle with academic tasks
 - Understand the differences in how high achievers and low achievers learn information
 - Know that students with learning difficulties often need to be explicitly taught study skills strategies
- This IRIS Module aligns with the following licensure and program standards and topic areas...

Notes

Page 1: Characteristics of High and Low Achievers

- An increasing number of students with disabilities receive instruction in the general education classroom
- Did You Know?
- Audio: Danette Waites discusses assumptions that teachers make about struggling students
- Audios: Erin and Kyra, both of whom have struggled academically, discuss how hard they worked even if their effort was not always evident in their assignments or on tests
- Link: Overview of the executive function processes of the three students from the Challenge
- Table: Some differences between high- and low-achieving learners
- Audio: Hannah, a student, discusses her strategic approach to studying
- Link: Executive Skills Questionnaire [teen version]
- Working Memory
 - Audio: Robert Reid elaborates on some of the challenges experienced by students with working memory deficits

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❖ Page 2: Importance of Teaching Study Skills Strategies

- Table: Study skills strategies that can help students address their executive function challenges
- Audio: Mary Anne Prater discusses the importance of teaching learning strategies in the general education classroom
- Audio: Don Deshler discusses the importance of teaching learning strategies and outlines several reasons why teachers often do not teach such strategies
- Audio: Erin shares her experiences before and after she applied effective study skills strategies to her schoolwork
- Research Shows

Notes

❖ Page 3: Models for Teaching Strategies

- Definition: strategy instruction
- Effective strategy instruction typically includes...
- Two strategy instruction models
 - Link: Self-Regulated Strategy Development [SRSD]
 - Link: Strategic Intervention Model [SIM]
- Audio: Karen Harris talks about SRSD
- Audio: Don Deshler talks about SIM
- The Importance of Practice Opportunities, Maintenance, and Generalization
 - Audio: Don Deshler discusses the importance of providing ample practice opportunities and of intentionally addressing maintenance and generalization of the strategy
- Research Shows
- Tip

Notes



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❖ Page 4: Considerations When Teaching Strategies

- Audio: Hannah talks about how she approaches challenging academic assignments
- Audio: Erin adds her own thoughts about how she approaches challenging academic assignments
- Research Shows
- Audio: Don Deshler discusses the importance of acknowledging students' struggles with learning as well as their resistance to trying new strategies
- Audio: Don Deshler discusses ways to engage and motivate students to learn a new study skills strategy

Notes

❖ Page 5: References & Additional Resources

- Suggested module citation
- References
- Additional Resources

❖ Page 6: Credits

- Suggested module citation
- Content Experts
- Module Developers
- Module Production Team
- Media Production Team
- Media
- Expert Interviews

Wrap Up

- Video: Summary of the module
- Quotation: Erin
- Revisit your Initial Thoughts responses



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Notes

Assessment

- Complete the numbered questions. Please note that the IRIS Center does not collect your Assessment responses. If this is a course assignment, you should turn them in to your professor using whatever method he or she requires.

Notes

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You Have Completed This Module

- Give Us Your Feedback
 - Link: [Module feedback survey form](#)
- Professional Development Hours
 - Link: [IRIS PD Options](#)
- Related Resources [[links](#)]