



# Late, Lost, & Unprepared..



**FOSTERING EXECUTIVE  
FUNCTION SKILLS**

# WHAT is Executive Function?

- ▶ “... refers to activities that one engages in which are self-directed and help the person engage in self-regulation.” —Dr. Russ Barkley
- ▶ Skills include:
  - ▶ Planning/organizing
  - ▶ Task execution
  - ▶ Time-management
  - ▶ Problem-solving
- ▶ EF skills:
  - ▶ develop over time
  - ▶ Are not fully developed until early childhood (23-26 years old)
  - ▶ Are the first part of your brain to start deteriorating

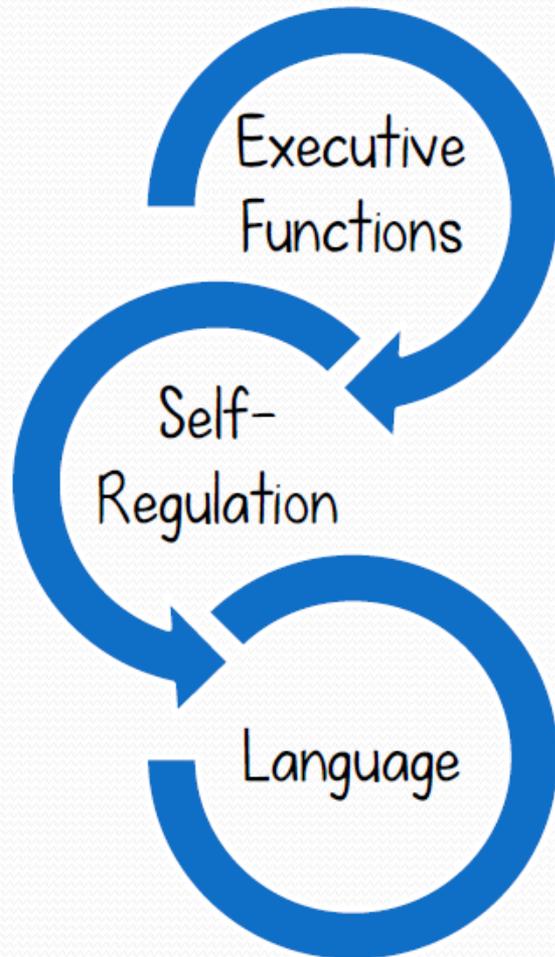
# WHY is it important?

- ▶ Executive Functioning is a SOCIAL system! It requires you to coordinate with other people.
- ▶ Kids with ADD/ADHD are 3-3 ½ years behind in EF skills.
- ▶ This is a DOING problem, not a learning problem. These kids know what to do, they just do not do what they know at the point of performance.
- ▶ When a kid has a hard time doing something, it's usually easier for the parent or the teacher to carry out the task which doesn't help the child learn independence.

# Our Social Skills are a direct result of our Executive Functions

- ▶ The ability to read a room, or a situation
- ▶ The ability to be flexible and adapt to different circumstances or expectations
- ▶ The ability to plan, problem solve and take others' perspectives into account.
- ▶ Although our social thinking skills develop and mature over time, the core abilities are the same. The social skills we learn as children on the playground are the same socially-based critical thinking skills we use to write a persuasive essay in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

## "What Are Executive Functions and Self-Regulation and What Do They Have To Do With Language-Learning Disorders?"



"Language disorders alone are insufficient for explaining the oral and written language performance problems of students with LLD. The influence of executive functions and self-regulatory processes on language production are multiple and must be accounted for in speech-language assessments and interventions. Interventions that address the reciprocal influences of executive function, self-regulatory, and language processes are essential if students with LLD are to realize success and independent functioning within academic and social settings."



"What? I don't remember what we read. I hate writing. It is such a confusing book. It's weird. This is going to take *forever*....."





"Honey we are leaving  
at 8:30 to go to Game  
Stop Store!"



Oh man...it is 8:20ish  
(time). No way ten minutes  
is enough time to wash the  
car (sequence in mind ). I  
gotta get the hose from  
the backyard and the soap  
and towels too (objects).  
Dang...Mom said we are  
leaving at 8:30 (people).  
Guess I will have to wash  
the car when we get back  
home.



"Honey we are leaving  
at 8:30 to go to Game Stop  
Store!"

I am going to wash the car  
and make \$5.00!



# Explaining EF to kids...

**S M  R T S**

EXECUTIVE FUNCTION & MENTORING PROGRAM



# Metacognition: “Thinking about our thinking”

**S M  R T S**

EXECUTIVE FUNCTION & MENTORING PROGRAM

## **Metacognition**



Lesson 1.1

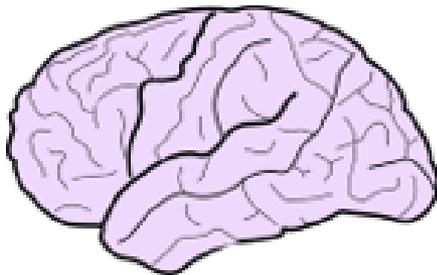
# “Cognitive Flexibility”

SMARTS

## What is Cognitive Flexibility?

**Cognitive flexibility** is the ability to think flexibly and to shift perspectives and approaches easily.

**Cognitive**

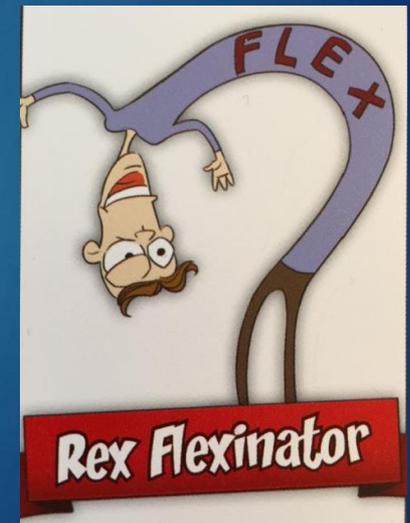
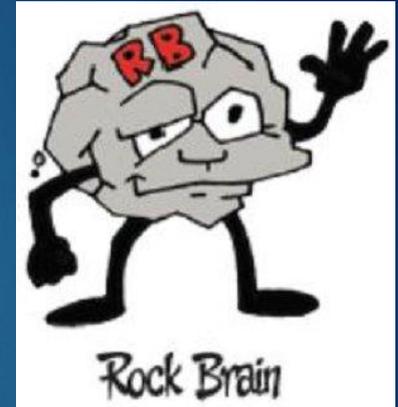


**Flexibility**



Lesson 1.2

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## Executive Function Processes

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### keep our minds running

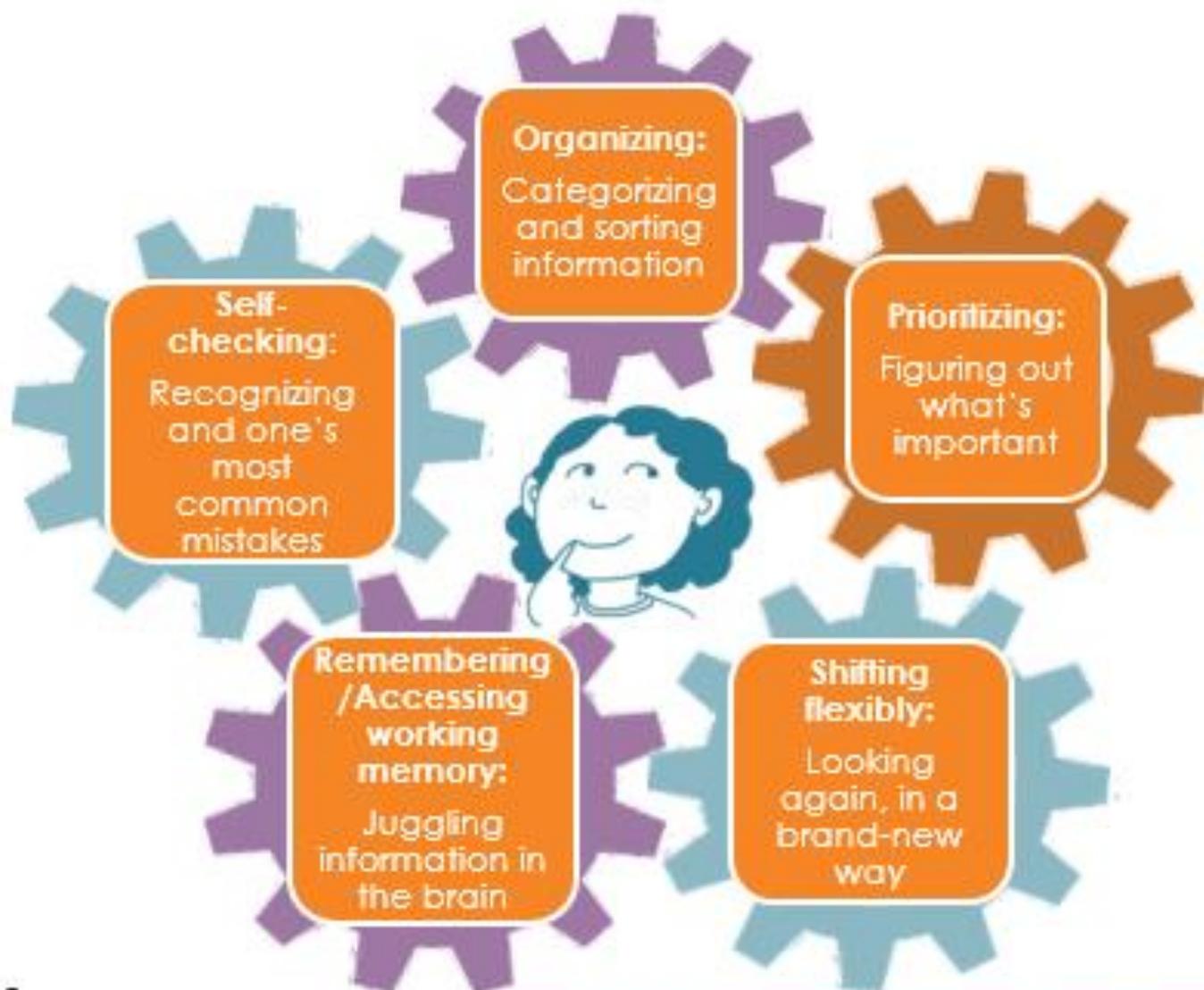
Maybe if I try this other approach I'll understand it better...

Should I be taking notes in class or getting a jumpstart on my HW?



I'm going to write these notes using an outline so they're clear...

## Elements of Executive Function



# "I-SEE" a Strategy!

Explain to students that a **successful strategy** is:

1. **Individualized** or self-generated by the student. Students know best what does or does not work for them.
2. **Systematic** or able to be used in a routine and regular way.
3. **Efficient** or it gets the job done successfully
4. **Effective** it works for the task at hand (different strategies work for different tasks)

**Make Flashcards**

**Highlight**

**USE COLORED FOLDERS**

**Set Timers**

**Three Column Notes**

**Whisper read**

**DRAW PICTURES**

# Strategy Challenge!

## Academic Strategies

1. Make outlines to organize your thoughts.
2. Word Q
3. Record lectures and listen back.
4. Put information into categories.
5. Make flashcards
6. Find a study buddy
7. Visualize it
8. Explain what you are learning

## Social Strategies

1. Read the Room.
2. Figure out the "hidden rules"
3. Think about choices.
4. Social Filter
5. Social Fake
6. Rate the size of your Problem.
7. Yoga
8. Be proactive!

## Attention Strategies

1. Keep daydreaming under control.
2. Keep your eyes on the speaker
3. Think about the words you are hearing.
4. Ignore distractions
5. Make a choice to focus on 1 thing.
6. Use a fidget.

## Strategy Reflection Sheet:

What strategies did you use this week?

Study Buddy

Active Listening

Repetition of Information

Make a Choice to Focus on 1 Thing

Note Taking

Ignore Distractions

Study Group

Focus with Your Eyes

Used Outlines & Diagrams

Yoga

Participate in Class Discussions

Ask questions

STOP & Read the Room

Word Q

Other:

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How did it go? Did you feel successful? Why?

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# 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens

Habit 1 Be Proactive

Habit 2 Begin With The End in Mind

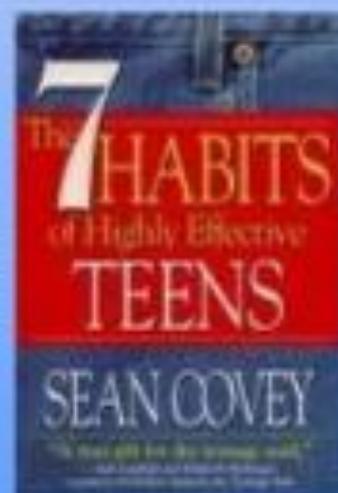
Habit 3 Put First Things First

Habit 4 Think Win-win

Habit 5 Seek First to Understand,  
Then to Be Understood

Habit 6 Synergize

Habit 7 Sharpen the Saw



Questions?

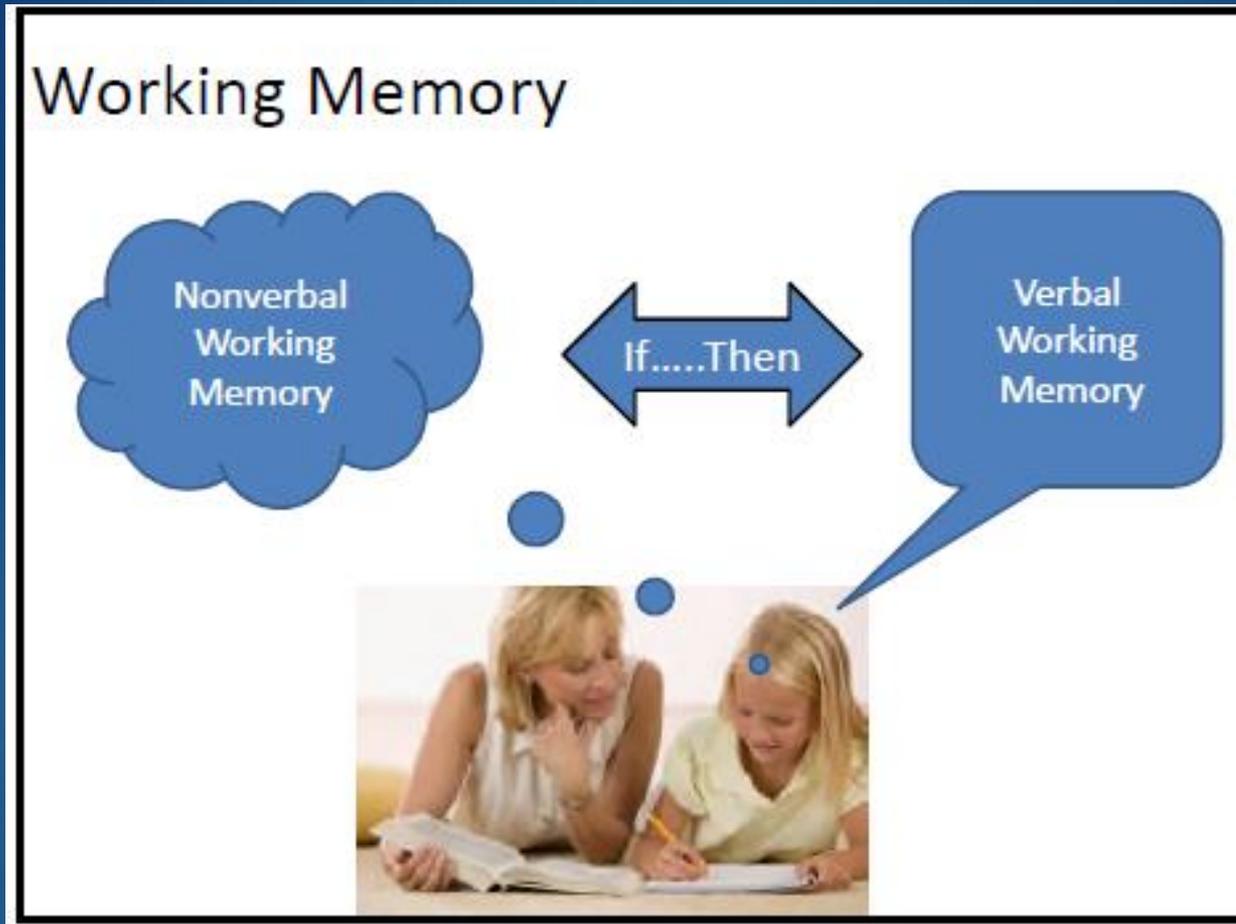


# Practical Strategies to Use at Home



- \* The Working Clock
- \* Get Ready, Do, Done
- \* Match the Picture
- \* STOP and Read the Room
- \* Future Glasses & Mental Dress Rehearsals

# Make it VISUAL!



We have UNLIMITED Visual Memory, but limited verbal WM

# “Time Blindness”



- Students with EF weaknesses are not tuned into the passage of time or the pace of work.
- They need concrete visuals to help them break down time.
- We have to train them to feel the passage of time.

# Time Management

Show the Sweep of Time



# Get Ready, Do, Done!

Today: \_\_\_\_\_

**Get Ready!**

**Do!**

**Done:  
What does it look like?**

# Today: We Will Practice How to Take a Timed Math Quiz

**Get Ready!**

S Math Sheet

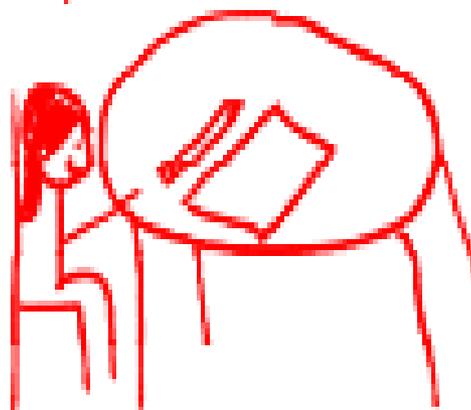
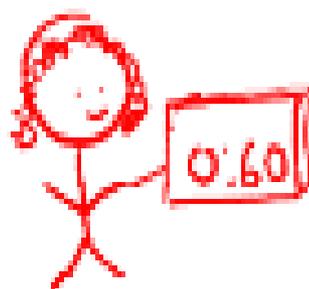
M Pencil

A

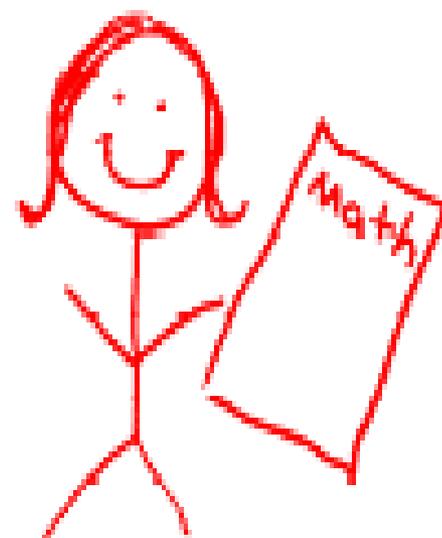
R

T

**Do!**



**Done: Look Like**



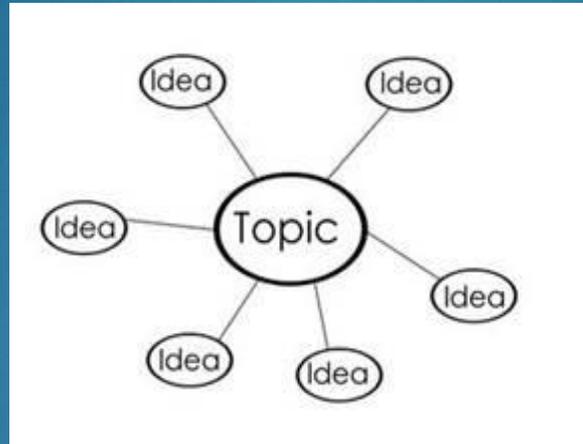
**Get Ready...**

“What do I need to get READY?”

- pencil
- paper
- laptop
- ???

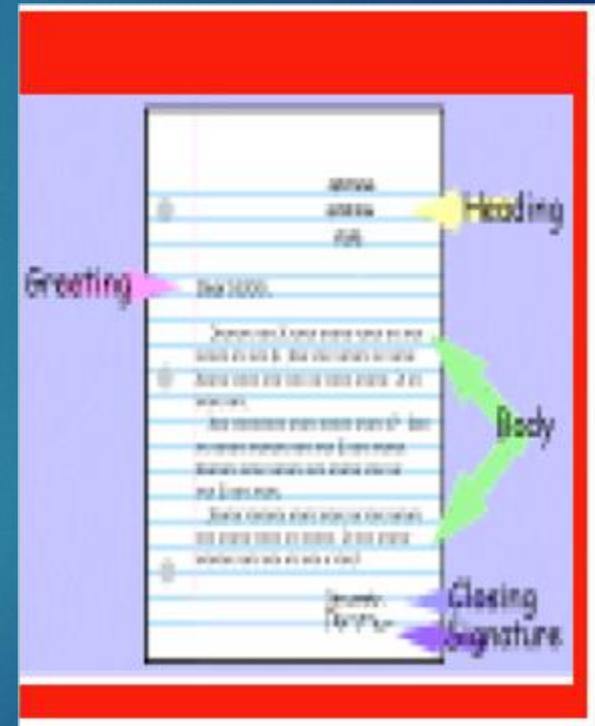
**Do!**

“What will I DO?”  
“What steps will I take?”



**DONE: Look Like?**

“What will it LOOK LIKE in the END?”



# Get Ready

What do I need to get READY?

**Empty my hands, stand up, and look at the flag.**

# Do

What will I DO?

**Stand with my RIGHT hand on my heart.  
Say the words to the pledge.  
KEEP my body to myself.**

# Done

What will it LOOK like in the end?

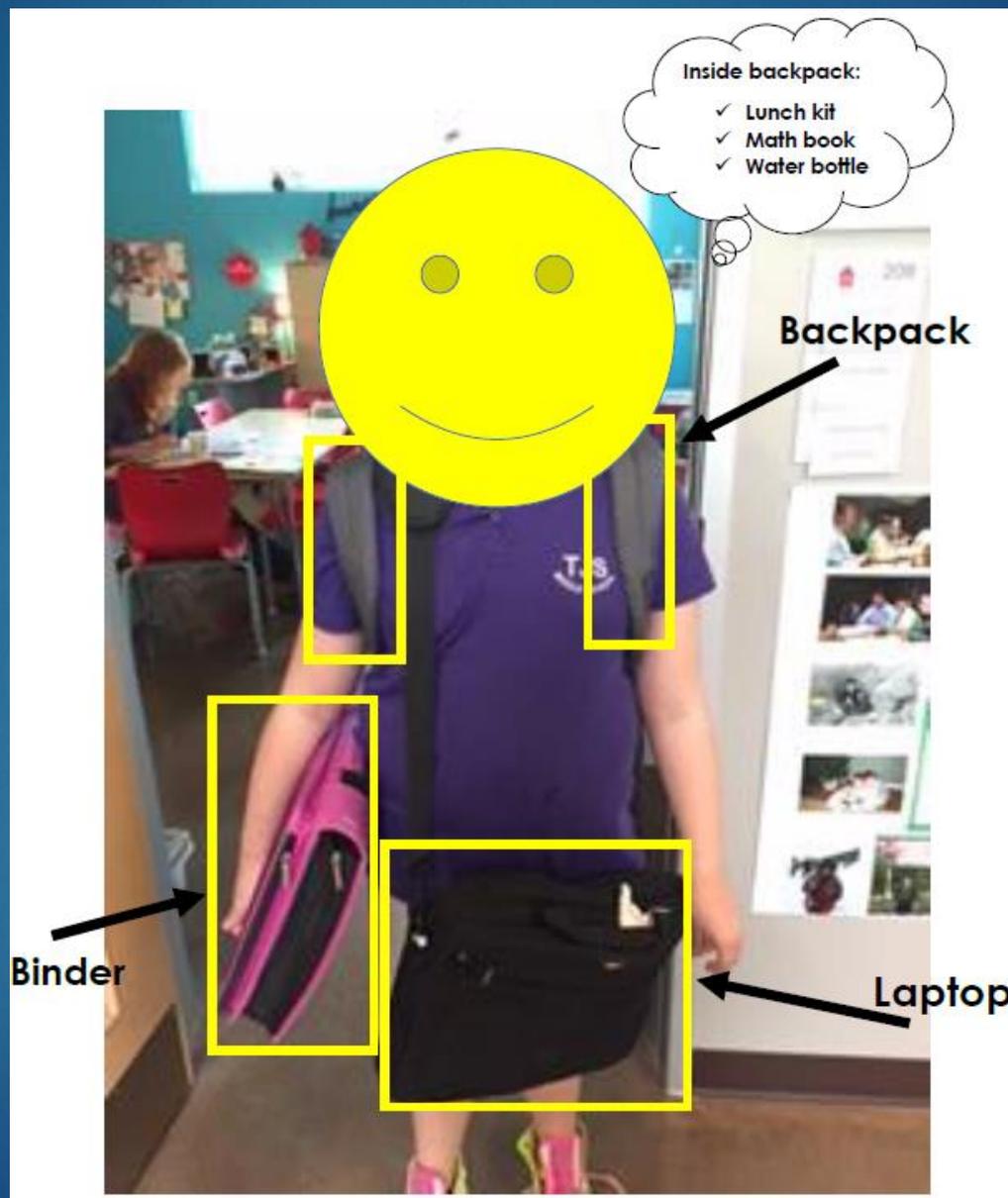


# Match the Picture



- ▶ To help with routine tasks such as getting ready for school or sports activities, take pictures of kids fully dressed with all their equipment or gear.
- ▶ Tell kids to “Match the picture.”
- ▶ This also works with cleaning a room, organizing a desk or locker...

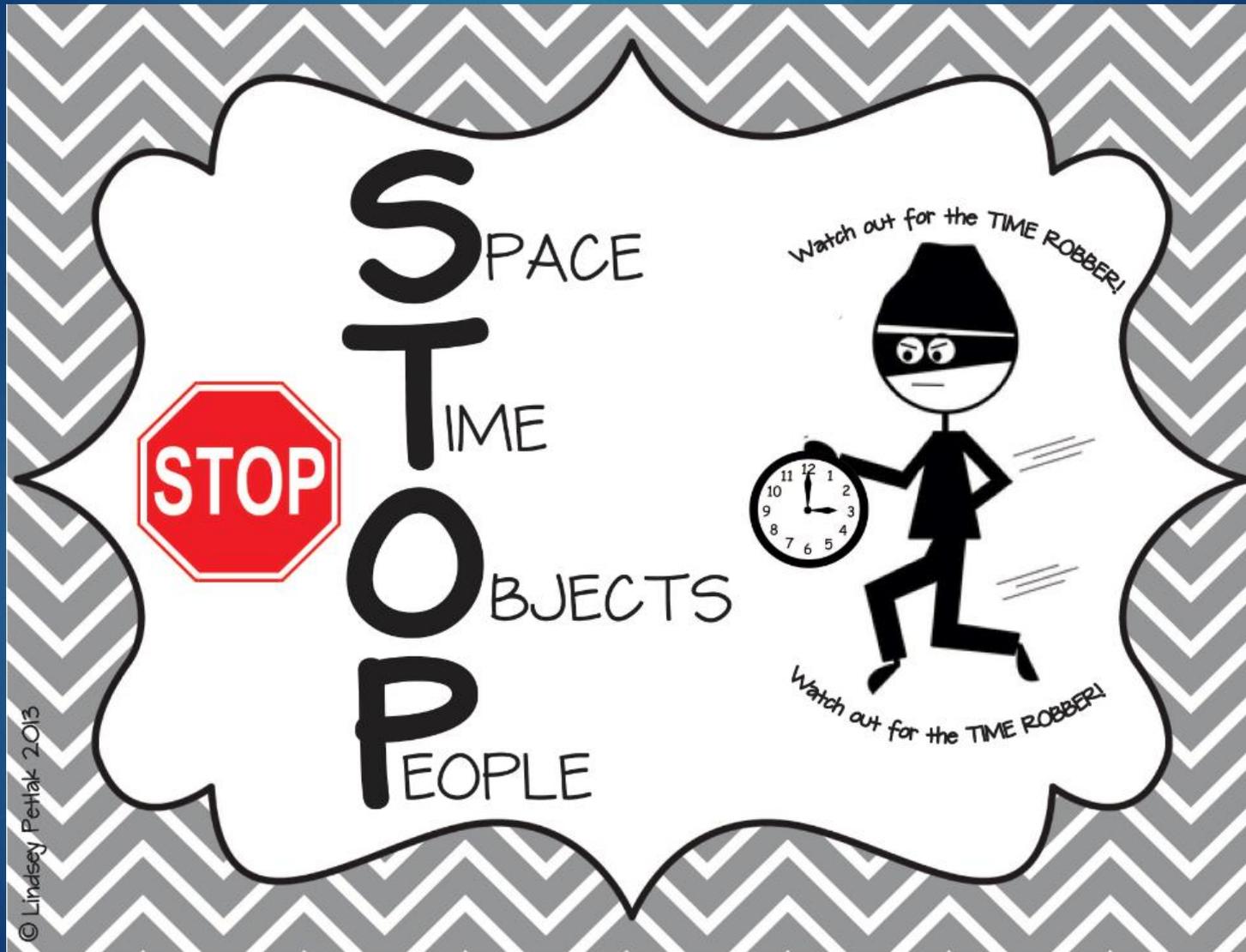
# Before walking out the door...



# Organizing a locker...



# STOP and Read the Room!



# Situational Awareness

## STOP and Read the Room

### Space

Read the Room

Where am I?  
What's going on?  
Is this Expected?  
Unexpected?

### Time

Get on the Timeline

Time of day (routine vs. non-routine)  
What is happening at this Moment in Time  
What is coming up?  
\*Predictable sequence  
What Pace is Required?

### Objects

Sense the Organization

How are things Organized?  
We Consider the basis for their Organization:  
Location  
Purpose

### People

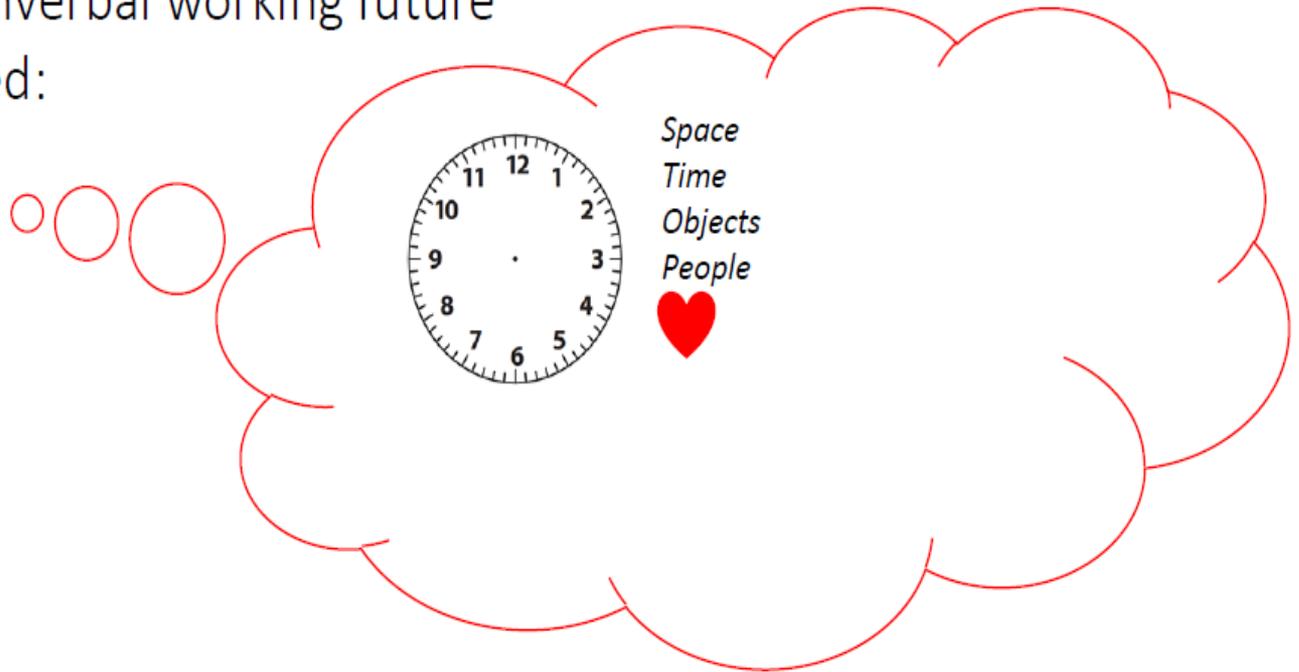
Read the Person

Face  
Body  
Appearance  
Mood  
Pace  
Saying



# Future Thinking...

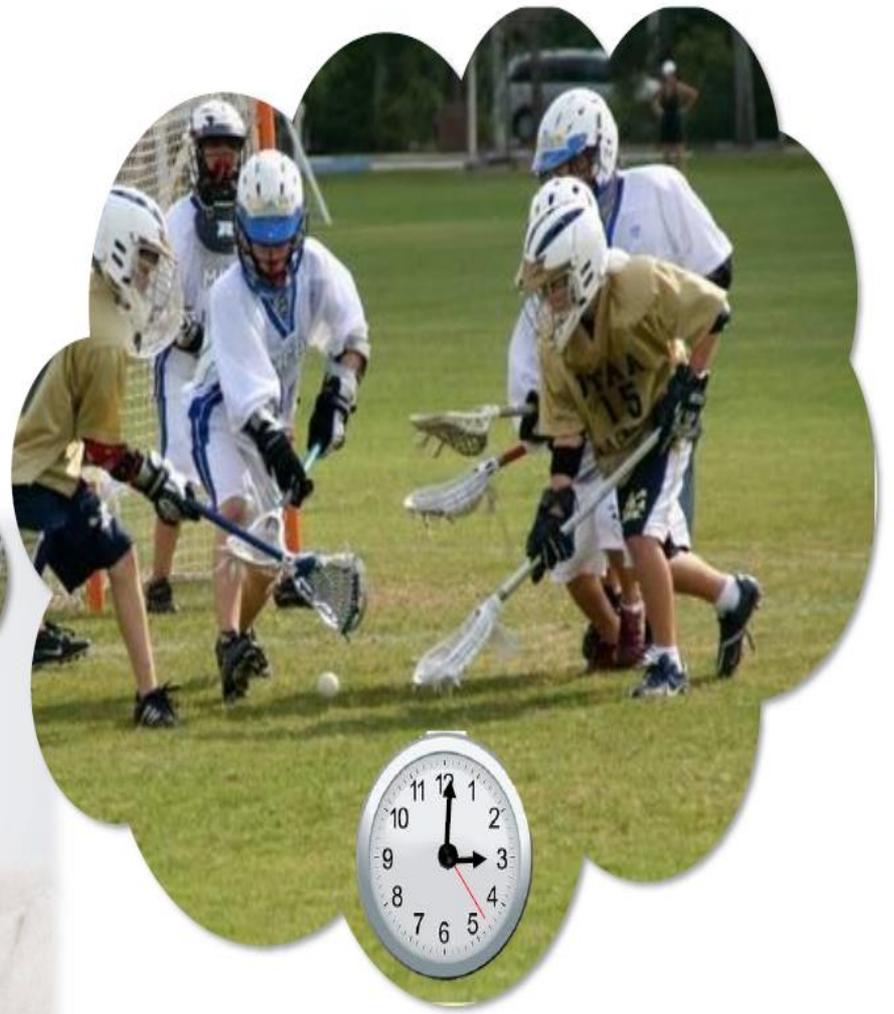
This type of nonverbal working future memory is called:



Mimetic Ideational Information Processing

# Mind Mime

- ▶ Mental dress rehearsal of the future. You can try out the task without risk.
- ▶ 90% of the time “task planning” happens in a different space than you execute it. You have to visualize it in a totally different space.
- ▶ Typically kids pre-experience and re-experience moments like this without being taught.
- ▶ Run Plan A and Plan B to see:
  - ▶ What it will look like?
  - ▶ What I will look like?
  - ▶ How am I moving to achieve this?
  - ▶ How do I feel?



If \_\_\_\_\_

Then \_\_\_\_\_

# Put on Your Future Glasses!



- ▶ “What will I LOOK LIKE 2 hours from now at carpool?”
- ▶ “What will I be DOING 30 minutes from now at lunch?”
- ▶ When a child can verbalize their plan and what it will LOOK LIKE, they are more likely to execute it that way in the future.

# Resources for Parents...

- [EF Skills Predict Students' Success in Life & School](#)
- [10 Steps To Foster Organization: Homework and Beyond!](#)
- [Enhancing & Practicing EF Skills with Students](#)
- [A Parent's Guide to Executive Function Skills Strategies for Tweens and Teens](#)
- [Research Institute for Learning and Development](#)
- [SMARTS Executive Function Curriculum](#)
- [Social Thinking](#)
- [Cognitive Connections](#)

# Resources for kids...



- ▶ [The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens by Sean Covey](#)
- ▶ [The ADHD Homework Survival Guide](#)
- ▶ [Julia Cook Executive Function Book Series](#)

Putting it all together...

## Social Thinking & Executive Function: 4 Steps of Communication



Questions?

Comments?

Conclusions?