

Teaching Self-Regulation: Strategies for Intentional Practice

Below are self-regulation processes and related strategies that, when explicitly modeled, taught, and practiced, strengthen student agency, increase positive learning behaviors, and improve motivation and engagement in learning. While many of these practices are widely used in classrooms, a shift in the teacher role is to be explicit and intentional about their use in supporting agency by modeling these practices and providing daily opportunities for students to practice and receive feedback on their use.

Self-Regulation Processes and Strategies

Process	Student actions	Instructional strategies to support students to use this self-regulation process
Goal setting	Set short-term goals for learning based on evidence and feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate learning goals and success criteria for the lesson. Support students to understand why they are learning specific goals. Ensure students understand the qualities of evidence they will be able to demonstrate by meeting the learning goal (e.g., share models and exemplars, engage students in co-constructing success criteria). Support students to set individual goals based on evidence and feedback from teachers and peers.
Self-monitoring	Monitor progress towards learning goals and adapt based on evidence of progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give students opportunities to share ideas about how they are learning. Model self-monitoring in relation to goals and criteria through think-alouds, calling attention to times when adjustments to learning are made. Engage students in self-monitoring activities, such as annotations, protocols, graphic organizers, journaling and teacher questions (e.g., Where are you in relation to the learning goal? Have you adjusted how you are working?). Discuss how which self-monitoring and reflection supported learning.
Feedback and seeking help	Seek advice and support from adults and peers, seek information, and solicit feedback on progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize structures through which students can gather feedback and support from peers during learning. Provide teacher and peer feedback that includes what the student did well and suggestions, hints or cues for advancing learning. Explore with students how they have used and benefitted from feedback. Model help-seeking behaviors (e.g., teacher think alouds about how to become “unstuck” during a learning activity).

Self-assessment	Assess learning, independent of teachers, and consider how current learning might relate to similar tasks in the past or future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide time, routines and structures for student self-assessment. • Explicitly model and teach self-assessment and provide templates and tools to guide independent practices. • Discuss with students how they might use self-assessment to address similar tasks or projects in the future.
Planning	Identify and apply strategies to achieve the learning goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer students opportunities to give input on how they are learning. • Plan and model think aloud strategies for particular tasks or projects. • Provide students with planning templates and graphic organizers to document their goals and strategies to meet them.
Self-motivation	Without external rewards, independently use strategies to keep learning on track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show respect for student perspectives and where students are in their learning. • Help students build knowledge of themselves as learners by providing time and structures for them to monitor and reflect on the quality of their work and their progress towards learning goals. • Enable students to make their own decisions about how to use feedback. • Create a non-comparative environment established on trust and cooperation.
Flexible use of strategies	Implement multiple learning strategies, use evidence to adapt or invent learning strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for students to give input on which learning strategies are most helpful to support their own learning. • Model and explain teacher’s own thought processes for completing activities and tasks. • Provide guided and independent practice for students to learn new strategies. • Structure ways for students to reflect individually and in groups about the use and value of specific learning strategies.
Attention Control	Identify ways to remove distractions from the environment and make learning easier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage students in discussions about study habits, strategies and behaviors that sustain attention and improvement (e.g., time management, engaging with peers, seeking help, using feedback, seeking conditions that are conducive to learning). • Ask students to self-record how they are using time and discuss their awareness of how much time they spend studying. • Allow students to use a range of study habits and strategies that support attention control (e.g., removing oneself from distractions, choosing a new partner or group, re-allocating time).

This resource is adapted from Zumberg, S., Tadlock, J., & Roberts, E.D. (2011). *Encouraging self-regulation in the classroom: A review of the literature*. Richmond, VA: Metropolitan Educational Research Consortium (MERC), Virginia Commonwealth University.