

Month 3: Mini Schedules

You're probably thinking that we already talked about mini schedules. So why do we have to talk about it again? Well, I love mini schedules so much that they need and deserve their own moment in the sun. They're so helpful and I have seen so much success with utilizing mini schedules and they were relatively easy intervention to implement this can cause some really positive behavior change because when your learner's are clear and expectations when they know what's coming next at they feel in control that can really decrease anxiety and negative behaviors and increase Independence and engagement. I am all on board for all of those things.

So many schedules are any way that we are using either visuals or tax or visuals and text to show the order of events and that could be implied events like the order of the steps we take to transition to lunch or that could be list that we might have been previously giving in a verbal way. So the things we're going to do in circle time or Guided reading today. Hey guys in guided reading weren't take a spelling test. We're going to do a worksheet. Then we're going to read our book with pairs. So things that we might have been previously giving as laundry list or things that we previously were assuming our mastered and a lot of those implied schedules are things that we might not be giving our kids enough Clarity on what we expect of them. And the Order of things that we would like them to do mini schedules can be so effective because many of our students struggle with receptive language processing. So that means something between the ear and the Brain happens. Our students aren't yet able to maybe process all of the verbal language that we're giving them and it when it comes to order of events and routines those can be language heavy times of our day. We're saying we're going to do this this this and this and her kids just can't keep up. They just can't process that much language yet.

So we want to use mini schedules to supplement the verbal times in our day that we're just talking too much and to supplement those embedded and implied routines that we might think our kids know but if they're struggling they're adding this extra support could really help clarify what we expect of them and what we want them to do when you utilize mini schedules. This isn't a magic wand. This isn't a post it once go through it once in the start of the year or the start of the month and just hope it works. This is a tool and we want to utilize tools. So this is something that you want to review regularly and model how to use go through this at the start of every day or every week or every period depending on the needs of your learner's. So let's talk about three areas.

We can utilize mini schedules. We can utilize mini schedules for implied routines.

We can utilize mini schedules for academics and we can utilize mini schedules for special events. So first, let's talk about mini schedules for implied routines.

This is where I see mini schedules really shine because sometimes we just assume our kids know what to do. We're like, oh we've been transitioning to gym all year.

They should know what to do. First of all, the should is my pet peeve. The should gets us nowhere, cool. I agree with you they should know what to do, but they don't so our jobs not over we want to make sure that we've explained what we expect of them and

The Autism Helper.

what we want them to do and the order that we want them to do it in a super concrete way and that might mean adding in some visuals with text or pictures to support some of that language that we might have previously been giving and then that just implied knowledge of you should just be observing your peers and watching what they're doing some of our kids that might not be the way they learn and there might not be enough appropriate peer role models to know exactly. What are the expected. Behaviors we might have kids modeling unexpected behaviors.

So mini schedules can be really successful here. I love super simple ones like this that just go through the things that we have to do when waiting in line or when sharpening our pencil who has a classroom where this becomes a big big carnival ride. I sharpen my pencil but on the way I got to talk to all of my friends and knock things over and touch all the things but we can clarify the expected order of events for something as simple as sharpening or pencil with a mini schedule or something like going to the bathroom how we transition there on our own or arriving into the classroom.

There's a lot of embedded steps these to me are so useful to give kind of the task step by step in a simple way and then pair it with that visual cue. So these common classroom routines visual sets are in the resources section and you can utilize those in your classroom right away their edibles. You can tweak them add in the steps that you use and just print and go that's sometimes the struggle with many schedules.

You're like I want to kind of make mini schedules for all these different things you might need to but I've already made them for you. So check out the credit section

for those common classroom is routines because those might be helpful now academics think about the different academic areas of your classroom, maybe direct instruction.

Maybe you have a science station. Maybe you have a guided reading groups station.

You want to tell your kids at each station what they're doing not they get to guided reading and you're like, hey cool. I made a schedule that got you here.

Now, we're going to do four different activities, but I'm not going to clarify in a way that might make sense to you morning Circle time is a big one that a mini schedule is really effective whenever I set up a mini schedule for Circle time or morning meeting in a gen Ed classroom without fail. The teacher always says to me later. They're like Sasha.

Did you know that that mini schedule helped all the kids not just the learner on the Spectrum. I'm like, yeah, I know. That's why I told you to do this. These aren't like special ed Voodoo strategies. These are great teaching strategies and a lot of kids benefit from added structure and added use of visuals.

So academics is no exception. I love things like simple mini schedule rotations.

So maybe you have different centers in your classroom, and you want to label them with colors. So you have a purple station yellow station a red a green a blue

or you just have one or two doesn't matter then when it's your students turn. They grab the schedule piece. They check in. This is where it gets really great after they check in

now. There's a list of the things they have to do a green center today. We're doing a group Reading Writing typing and then coloring. It's super clear what's expected of them. It's super clear how much work they have to do. It's also super clear one potential reinforcement is coming. Maybe I'm really looking forward to coloring. Now I know okay.

The Autism Helper.

I got to get through these three things. Then I get to coloring. It's really clear on what's coming if this color-coded schedule Center set up might not see ,this is a lot of S's, might seem like something that would work well in your classroom, you can download that right within this video.

I have all of the images and different Center options set up there for you.

So again a streamline quick and easy way to add in that mini schedule to some of your academic areas the third area you can use mini schedules is for special events and new activities things like field trips things like class parties pep rallies assemblies anything where there's a change is innately going to be harder. It's hard for everyone. It's harder for me. I don't like change days. I like things to be the same. So if changes are hard for us, imagine how hard it is for our Learners and then that change comes up that's a challenging, you know experience and we sometimes rely too much on verbal language to help our kids. Get through it. We're like yeah, we have no math group in no gym class today because we're going to do photo day and we have to go take pictures and explaining that is just not clarifying the expectations there. I found this to be especially really successful for class parties. I talked about this in the last video class parties used to be so so hard for me until I added structure and routines and mini schedules.

So making mini schedules for the party first. We're doing a game, then Christmas find it, then tree craft then Christmas cookies and if you'll notice these are all different because I was grouping the students so I had not only a center-based party but a structured party with mini schedules this classroom party setup kit is in the credit section. You can use your credits to grab this because I've got it all prepped for you with activities if that seems too overwhelming for one day, but it's one day that can be a really challenging one. If we don't add some of these tools that our kids need So start thinking about the different areas of your day where mini schedules could be useful. I'm all about the baby steps.

So pick one area to start don't like the way I'm going to put all this stuff and implement it right away pick one thing start with those common classroom routines. Like I showed you or start to implement the color-coded schedules or just even for some of your direct instruction or guided reading groups start writing it on. The board doesn't have to be fancy on your dry erase board instead of just saying what you're doing right it also and if you could even draw a little picture like we're going to write something and then draw a picture of a pencil and we're going to do a worksheet draw a little box for worksheet just to give that added cue that will help our kids be more successful. Once you kind of start playing around with mini schedules and see how independent it can make our Learners. It's fun to see what other areas we can Implement mini schedules as well.