

Example Lesson Plan: If I Complete My Task Early

Rationale: Providing structured activities for students who complete their tasks early helps maintain an engaging and productive classroom environment. The teacher should curate choice boards with some student input. Choice boards should be equitable throughout a school. One class making model airplanes and another reading the encyclopedia may be problematic.

Steps: Introduce the procedure for “If I Complete My Task Early” by putting the steps of the procedure on the board:

1. Finish Your Assigned Work
 - Students are on-task and only stop working when they check in with an adult or use another pre-taught check-in procedure (sample procedures listed in Appendix A)
 - It is not a race, and free choice time is never guaranteed
2. Select an Activity from the Choice Board
 - The student quietly transitions to the chosen activity from a displayed list of teacher-approved options (sample choice board is given in Appendix B)
3. Stay On-Task
 - The student independently works on the activity until prompted by the teacher or classroom timer
4. Clean Up
 - The student is responsible for returning all materials before transitioning to the next activity

Expectations: Introduce the behavior expectations for “If I Complete My Task Early” by displaying the associated section of the classroom behavior matrix on the board:

School-wide Expectation	“If I Complete My Task Early” Classroom Procedure
Safe	Use one of the classroom calm down strategies if you are feeling upset/anxious at not having time to finish tasks Clean up promptly when it is time
Respectful	If the teacher shows you corrections/additions that need to be made to your work, say “Okay” and do them right away Choose a place to work that doesn’t disturb others who are still working Engage in meaningful activities Make sure to keep good personal space between you and your peers

School-wide Expectation	“If I Complete My Task Early” Classroom Procedure
Responsible	<p>Ensure that all tasks are done properly before checking in with the teacher</p> <p>Use the class-wide approach to checking in with the teacher when you are finished</p> <p>Make a choice and follow through without constant supervision</p> <p>Stick with the choice until the end of the block (no switching activities)</p>
As your teacher, I will:	<p>Clearly outline the steps students follow once they complete their task</p> <p>Set behavioral expectations while engaging in choice board activities</p> <p>Give the class many opportunities to practice this skill</p> <p>Ensure that students have satisfactorily completed their individual assigned tasks</p> <p>Monitor engagement and make adjustments if needed</p> <p>Encourage independence</p> <p>Provide positive and corrective behavior-specific feedback</p>

Examples and Non-Examples:

- Model each step of the procedure as an example.
- Model some of the identified non-example behaviors. Be sure to identify these behaviors as non-examples.

Practice: Have students practice and provide behavior-specific feedback.

Check for Understanding: Ask students questions about the procedure. For example:

- "Can you move to a choice activity whenever you want?" No. Respectfully use our classroom procedure of, e.g., using sticky notes, nonverbal hand gesture.
- "Will there always be a chance for you to have free choice time?" No.
- "What can you do if you are stuck on your assignment?" Raise your hand to ask for help.
- "What should you do if someone is being loud during their free choice time?" Ignore distractions and quietly let the teacher know.
- "Can I do something that isn't on the Choice Board?" No. If you think of something else you'd like to do, we can chat about it at an appropriate time.

Appendix A

Sample Check-in Procedures

Signal Cards

Each student can have a set of colored cards at their desk. When they finish their work, they place a specific color card (e.g., green) at the corner of their desk to signal that they are done. Yellow means I have a question, and Green means I am good to go.

Electronic Notification

If students have access to tablets or computers, they can send a quick message through a classroom app (e.g., Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams) to let the teacher know they are finished.

Finished Work Bin

Designate a specific bin or tray where students can place their completed work. Once they have submitted their work, they can move on to their next activity.

Desk Flags

Provide small flags that students can raise on their desks when they complete their work. This is a discreet way to signal the teacher without disrupting the class.

Sticky Notes

Students can write “Finished” on a sticky note and place it on the edge of their desk, making it easy for the teacher to see as they walk around the room.

Classroom Light Signal

Install a small light or LED indicator at each desk. When students finish their work, they can turn the light on/off to notify the teacher.

Hand Signals

Teach students a specific hand signal they can use at their desk to indicate they are done. The teacher can acknowledge with a nod and direct them to the next activity.

Digital Timer

Use a classroom management tool that allows students to click a “done” button when they finish their work. The teacher receives a notification on their own device.

Appendix B

Sample Free Choice Board

Reading Take your book and read! Find a spot in the classroom that works for you	Creative Writing Write a short story or a poem about your favorite season	Puzzle Work on a group puzzle at the puzzle table
Math Challenges Solve the math problems in the challenge folder	Coloring Choose from the coloring pages available or draw on your own	Word Games Crosswords, Wordle, or word searches from the game shelf
Mindfulness Activities Practice mindfulness using the guided activities provided	Coding Practice Complete a coding challenge using the classroom tablets	Research Project Research a topic of your choice and create a mini-presentation to share with the class

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