

FOUNDATIONS OF TIMING INSTRUCTION

These helpful tips might provide some insight to help us to tighten up your lessons!

Pacing:

- Students will take as much time as they are given – more time doesn't usually translate to a better product.
- Students are likely to be disruptive if they have too much time or too little time to complete an assignment.
- Pacing includes the order or flow of the lesson in addition to how long each segment will take.
- It is valuable to account for how much time each segment will take and note the actual time you will move from one piece to another.

RULE OF THUMB: When planning, consider that it takes students about 3 times longer to complete an assignment with resources (other students, the book, etc.) than it will take you.

- Example: If you prepare a quiz or test, take it yourself. If you can complete your "Key" in 5 minutes, it will take the students around 15 minutes.

Timing

- We want to plan for every lesson to be from "bell to bell."
- Lessons that end early open the door for student misbehavior and teacher frustration.
- Lessons that require additional time create confusion, might leave messes, and eat up time from future classes.
- From a planning standpoint, it can be problematic when some students finish faster than other students.

RULE OF THUMB: Part 1 – Always have a *SPONGE* activity ready to *soak up* extra time or that would be appropriate for students who finish early.

- Example: Independent Reading; drawing a scene; organizing a timeline; Learning log

RULE OF THUMB: Part 2 – Pay attention to the timing, when a lesson appears to be running long, make adjustments in the expectations for the class period. Establish and communicate goals for completion by the end of the period or for homework.



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Transitions

- Transitioning from one activity to another takes time.
- Undefined transitions allow for students to become distracted/disruptive and waste even more time.
- Undefined transitions allow for teachers to become distracted by disruptive students and class details (attendance, answering questions, dolling out the bathroom pass).
- Transitions from one activity to another are often unclear, leaving the students with only a vague idea of what they *should* be doing.

RULE OF THUMB: Strategically plan for transitions by announcing them in advance and clearly stating the expectations.

- Example: We have two minutes left in small groups, in two minutes you need to move your desk back and begin working on your exit slip. (Repeat, repeat, repeat)

Closings

- Brain research says that students are most likely to remember what is said/done in the first and last ten minutes of the class.
- Closings help students identify the most important information and give a sense of completion to the class period.
- Closings are the first thing to get cut when a lesson goes over time.
- Closings can be varied by using several different techniques to summarize the lesson and reinforce the important information.

RULE OF THUMB: Be diligent and follow through with the plans for the closing, even if the lesson is running longer than expected. (Use Rules of Thumb for pacing, transitions and timing!)

- Example: “I know you don’t have time to finish this assignment in class but take about 2 more minutes to work up to question 4 and at 12:55 we’ll come back together to review the important information.”

