

A Continuous Process of Improvement: Collect - Analyze - Process - Act (CAPA) Cycle Form

This feedback cycle of collecting evidence, analyzing its impact, determining and planning for appropriate improvements, and putting them into practice, builds the capacity of all staff to effectively apply an impactful improvement process to enhance teacher practice and improve student achievement.



Collect - Analyze - Process - Act (CAPA) Cycle Protocol

CAPA Pre-Planning Lesson Focus: Module 1: Routines & Transitions - Grade 4

Module 1: Classroom Environment, Student Engagement and Commitment to Learning

Goal Statement (High leverage student skills):

What student skill/attribute are we trying to improve?

My goal is for students to have effective routines and transitions to maximize instruction time.

How will we know that improvement has occurred (measures & evidence)?

I will know that students have mastered routines and transitions when students are well-rehearsed in what they need to do at a given time. They might ask clarifying questions, but they know where to get materials, what the expectations are, and what they need to be doing.

Strategy Focus (High leverage instructional skills):

What CCT-aligned Rubric Domain/Indicator will you use as the focus of your improvement strategy?

Indicator 1c: Maximizing instructional time by effectively managing routines and transitions.

What will you do to improve your performance in this area?

I will reflect on the effectiveness of my class's current routines and transitions, learn about strategies and

techniques to improve student mastery, and implement my new learning to help students be successful.

Feedback Cycle Step	Reflection/Notes
Collect - Consider and plan to collect objective evidence aligned to the goal statement and the strategy statement. (<i>Be sure you have prepared to generate enough objective evidence for both teacher and student action to complete the cycle.</i>) Think about which type(s) of evidence - observation, artifact review, conversation - might produce the most useful information for improvement for this goal and strategy? - What do you anticipate will be the impact on your strategy actions on student performance on the goal for learning? - Complete the activity and employ an appropriate evidence gathering strategy(ies) according to your plan	I knew that I needed to learn more about my students in order to establish routines that would work specifically for the children in my class. I reviewed 504 files and met with teachers to learn more about the demographics of my students. I learned that 5 of my students had 504s, for reasons such as ADHD, Diabetes, and Disruptive Disorder. I learned that they received accommodations, such as alternate seating, more time on tests, and the ability to take breaks throughout the day. I also met with the principal, the special education teacher, and the school psychologist to discuss specific students in more detail. We talked about Q and N, and how they might need some space to move around and fidget with something. Additionally, there were three students in particular with routines and transitions-based needs. I learned that one student, E, required extra structure during transition times. I also learned that he and another student, J, should be separated as much as possible. J also needed concise and direct instructions in order for him to be successful. Finally, I learned that A and E both have behavior charts to help them stay on task and demonstrate self-control.
Analyze - Review and label your evidence for student or teacher origin. - Sort for relevance if appropriate. - How does the evidence align with the desired goal statement and strategy statement? - Is your evidence representative of both teacher and student actions and allow for appropriate reflection on the goal and strategy statements? - If not, what are the gaps and can they be filled after the fact?	My main take-away from these meetings was that I needed to maximize structure in the classroom, particularly during transition times. This would help all of my students be successful, but especially the students with 504 plans. I knew that if I could set clear routines for each subject and transition, E, J, and A would benefit.
Process - Given the evidence, what is your assessment of the impact of your strategy on the targeted student performance goal? - How might you summarize any trends or patterns in the evidence? What adult actions do you believe most influenced the results? - Do any new questions arise as a result of your reflections on this evidence? - What action step(s) are most likely to address the	I knew that I wanted to set clear expectations for routines and transitions, but I was not sure how to go about doing so. Because of this, I turned to expert advice of veteran teachers and educational publications. I met once again with the principal, the special education teacher, and the school psychologist to discuss strategies that would work with my students. I learned that having designated "spots" to go during each transition would greatly benefit this group, and

needs identified in the evidence?	that having a line order, pre-assigned work partners, and individual desk spaces would be a good place to start. I read a book recommended to me by a colleague. "The First Six Weeks of School," a Responsive Classroom book, has age-appropriate strategies for starting the year for each elementary grade level. The book talked about what to say to the class, sample schedules to follow, and even activities to introduce and practice routines. For example, the first day of fourth grade included time for a math activity. The teacher would explain what to do, and students would practice gathering materials and working with a partner.
Act - Based on role/audience/context, implement the plan - Informally review results or initiate a new CAPA cycle	I used what I had learned about my students, responsive classroom, and what has worked in the past to set up routines. I planned desk arrangements based on who needed to be close to the board to stay focused, like A, J, N, and Q. I also separated people that I knew would distract each other, like E and J. Similarly, I created a line order for students to follow whenever they had to line up - like going to a special, or coming back to the classroom from lunch and recess. Every time I made a group or partnership, I checked with a more knowledgeable staff member to make sure it would work. Finally, I set the schedule based on what subjects this group of students liked best. I chose to do writing in the morning, since it was a difficult subject for my group and it required more focus. I chose to do math in the afternoon, because my students were strong in that subject and it would be easy to bring them out of that afternoon haze. I also set routines for certain times during the day, such as arrival. I directed students to unpack their backpacks, hand in homework and notes, and sit at their desks to begin their morning work. Additionally, I knew that I wanted to allow them flexible seating during certain work blocks, so I set up places in my classroom that students could move to. I then recognized that I didn't want anybody racing to a specific spot, so I decided to teach the students to ask me before moving anywhere. In general, I thought about the needs of my students, what I had learned from experts, and what had worked best in the past for this group.

Collect - Consider and plan to collect objective evidence aligned to the goal statement and the strategy statement. (<i>Be sure you have prepared to generate enough objective evidence for both teacher and student action to complete the cycle.</i>) Think about which type(s) of evidence - observation, artifact review, conversation - might produce the most useful information for improvement for this goal and strategy? - What do you anticipate will be the impact on your strategy actions on student performance on the goal for learning? - Complete the activity and employ an appropriate evidence gathering strategy(ies) according to your plan	Throughout the first couple weeks of school, I introduced different routines and transitions. Student sometimes followed the expectations, but other times did not. Additionally, it varied student to student who was and was not meeting the expectations. For example, in September during one transition to the rug, I noticed that 7 students followed the directions the first time and transitioned immediately. However, E, Q, and A needed me to repeat the directions once more. J and N still needed 3 repetitions. All in all, it took 4 minutes to make a transition that should have only taken 1. These students were frequently needing extra reminders to complete transitions. Each day, those 5 students would require at least 2 extra prompts to stay on task during a routine or transition.
Analyze - Review and label your evidence for student or teacher origin. - Sort for relevance if appropriate. - How does the evidence align with the desired goal statement and strategy statement? - Is your evidence representative of both teacher and student actions and allow for appropriate reflection on the goal and strategy statements? - If not, what are the gaps and can they be filled after the fact?	I thought about those 5 students and what I could do to support them and their needs. While E and A had behavior charts to reinforce expectations, I quickly realized that there was no whole-class way to reinforce expectations of routines and transitions. Students were developing awareness of the expectations, but there was not always motivation to follow the expectations effectively. This evidence reinforced my belief in the need to implement indicator 1C. In other words, I needed a way to hold my whole class accountable for their routines and transitions. This would not only help positively reinforce the 7 students who more consistently followed the behavior expectations, but would also motivate the 5 who needed a little extra support. Particularly N, Q, and J, who did not have individualized behavior charts.
Process - Given the evidence, what is your assessment of the impact of your strategy on the targeted student performance goal? - How might you summarize any trends or patterns in the evidence? What adult actions do you believe most influenced the results? - Do any new questions arise as a result of your reflections on this evidence? - What action step(s) are most likely to address the needs identified in the evidence?	I asked myself what kind of system I could adopt in my classroom to motivate students to meet the expectations and to reinforce their independence of successfully meeting them. I decided to do research on behaviorist theory, to refresh my memory on philosophy and techniques. I found a particularly helpful article published by Southern California's Department of Education, called "Use of Reinforcement in Behavior Management Strategies" (link). The article reviewed the types of reinforcement, primary v.s. secondary rewards, and how different things could be reinforcing to different people. Other sources also suggested behavior management techniques as reinforcers,

	such as clip charts and marble jars. I then talked with other teachers about what has worked for them in the past. The 3rd and 5th grade teachers introduced me to Class Dojo, where students earn individual points for meeting the expectations, and can also lose points if they do not meet the expectations. I also reached out to my cooperating teacher from student teaching, who reminded me about the system she used - where the class as a whole worked together to earn points towards a reward. Once a certain number of points was earned, the reward was given.
Act - Based on role/audience/context, implement the plan - Informally review results or initiate a new CAPA cycle	Overall, I knew that I wanted a system that focused on positive reinforcement. I also wanted to encourage students to work together to meet their goals and promote collaboration among the class. So I decided to use a whole-class reward system, based on my cooperating teacher's system from my student teaching. However, because of what I learned from the Behaviorist article, I knew that I needed to involve my students in the process of this decision. They would provide insight as to what reward would truly be motivating and reinforcing for them, and I would adapt my general plan to fit their needs more specifically. I facilitated a class discussion about the points system and what would be a good reward to choose. All of the students enjoyed the math game Prodigy, and decided that it would be a motivating reward for them. I also opened up the discussion to the system in general. Q voiced concern that if we set up the system to not get a reward until a certain number of points are earned, the class might never earn the reward at all. Then E suggested that the number of points we earn could be the number of minutes we spend doing the reward. That way, we decided that the class could consistently earn a reward, but the time spent would be dependent on the class' behavior. That ended up being the system I implemented. Based on the learning from experts and my students, we decided that during each subject during the day, students can earn a point for following the expectations for routines and transitions. Points build over the week, and on Friday afternoons the number of points they earn is the number of minutes they can spend playing Prodigy. Because of this,

students were motivated to follow the routines. There was accountability for following the expectations, and not doing so.

Collect

- Consider and plan to collect objective evidence aligned to the goal statement and the strategy statement. *(Be sure you have prepared to generate enough objective evidence for both teacher and student action to complete the cycle.)* Think about which type(s) of evidence - observation, artifact review, conversation - might produce the most useful information for improvement for this goal and strategy?
- What do you anticipate will be the impact on your strategy actions on student performance on the goal for learning?
- Complete the activity and employ an appropriate evidence gathering strategy(ies) according to your plan

There was improvement in the class overall, especially during lessons. For example, during a transition to the rug, I noticed that 8 students followed the directions immediately. We reduced our transition time of 4 minutes down to about 3.5 minutes. I knew that some students were motivated when I heard one student tell another, "Hurry! We need extra points!"

Although there was improvement, not all of my students were making transitions quickly. I gave 3 reminders to N, E, J, and Q because they were talking, making other students laugh, and not focused on the transition.

Other class members would also have days that they did not meet the behavior expectations during transition times. E and another student, Merrick, are close friends, and would frequently stop and chat with each other instead of putting away materials or lining up. This would happen with every group of friends in my class at some point or another. In general, students would get easily distracted during a transition, and begin talking, continue the previous activity, or start a new and unrelated activity.

Analyze

- Review and label your evidence for student or teacher origin.
- Sort for relevance if appropriate.
- How does the evidence align with the desired goal statement and strategy statement?
- Is your evidence representative of both teacher and student actions and allow for appropriate reflection on the goal and strategy statements?
- If not, what are the gaps and can they be filled after the fact?

I needed other strategies to reinforce transition times. The reinforcement from our Prodigy reward system was not working as well for all students as I had originally predicted. Some students were still inconsistent with the transitions, frequently needing reminders of the expectations to earn a point. I knew that, if something isn't working, a teacher needs to adapt to meet the needs of his/her students.

Process

- Given the evidence, what is your assessment of the impact of your strategy on the targeted student performance goal?
- How might you summarize any trends or patterns in the evidence? What adult actions do you believe most

The evidence made me realize that I needed to learn more strategies for transitions in the classroom. I talked to my mentor about this, and she helped me find informative articles such as "Teaching Transitions" by Responsive Classroom ([link](#)), and "How to Improve Classroom Management with

influenced the results? - Do any new questions arise as a result of your reflections on this evidence? - What action step(s) are most likely to address the needs identified in the evidence?	Effective Routines" by ThoughtCo (link). These articles taught me that I might not be making the expectations clear enough during each transition. I needed to be specific and purposeful with my directions, so students know exactly what they should be doing with no room for confusion. I accompanied the advice from my mentor with my own research, and found an article from Edutopia called "Mastering Classroom Transitions" by Todd Finley (link). The article gave practical tips and suggestions about transitions to help teachers maximize instructional time.
Act - Based on role/audience/context, implement the plan - Informally review results or initiate a new CAPA cycle	After reading the article, I realized that there are questions teachers can ask themselves to troubleshoot what might be the problem with a transition. I began asking the following: - Did I provide too many or too few directions? - Did the transitions catch kids off guard when they were absorbed in an activity? - Did too many kids have nothing to do? - Are there specific students who created chaos? These questions made me realize that there were times where I was not clear enough with my expectations and directions. The students were not following the expectations because they did not always know what they were. Because of this, I knew I needed to be very specific and very clear about what I wanted the students to do with every transition. Before giving directions, I began imagining exactly how I wanted the transition to go, and what the students needed to do in order to make the transition successful. I began describing exactly what I expected of them in my directions. During the next day's transition from lunch to independent reading, I stopped my class in the hallway before we went inside the classroom. I imagined the students quietly hanging up their coats and putting their lunch boxes away, and immediately getting their books to begin reading. I knew from there what I needed to say in order to communicate my expectations of them. I said, "ok everyone - when you get into the room, I want you to quietly put your things away and take out your books. We are doing independent reading, so please no talking as you choose a spot to read."

Because of my clear directions, the students knew what was expected of them and how they could meet those expectations. Only one student needed an extra reminder of what to do, which was greatly reduced from the 4 or 5 students who typically needed reminders! J took a long time to get his book, and got distracted on his way back to his desk. Because of his 504, I reminded him in a clear, concise way to stay focused. Then, he was able to complete the transition by walking quietly and directly to his desk with his hands by his sides. Overall, this transition from lunch to independent reading only took about 2 minutes, which was reduced from previous transitions as long as 6 minutes.

My students, of course, are not always 100% successful in following our routines during class time and transition time. Sometimes problems arise, our class has a rough moment, or a distraction happens that throws us off a little. But this is an ongoing process, and I continue to seek advice from experts such as veteran teachers and educational publications. Overall, I have observed the progress that my students have made from the beginning of the year. They have become progressively more effective at following routines and transition procedures - which, in turn, has helped maximize instructional time.