

Helping Students Slow Down as They Work

Consider the Reason. Observe your rushing student and take note of why he or she is rushing. Is your student rushing through the work because he is challenged by it or bored with it? Some students, such as students with ADHD, rush because the thoughts move so quickly in their mind that they need to put down their answer before they lose their train of thought. Other students rush because they don't have the energy to focus and just want to get it done. Perhaps your student is rushing through his work because he wants to do other things.

Get to Know Your Students. It's very important to know your students and their learning style. This will help you understand a bit more about your students' choices and motivation. Perhaps the student is struggling a bit with confidence and is feeling defeated. By knowing your student, you are able to know their needs better.

Teach a High-Quality Mindset. Create the mindset to not rush through their work, but instead create high-quality work. Demonstrate to your student what this looks like, sounds like, and how to even check their work afterward. Be consistent about this mindset.

Provide Self-Checking Tools. Some students who rush through their work may need self-checking tools such as a checklist or a rubric of what to do when they finish an assignment. Students could initial next to each piece of the rubric or checklist stating they have done it if desired. This could be specific for each subject area, or very broad. Some examples of a checklist would be:

- Did you read the directions? If so, place a star next to them.
- Did you check for errors?
- Did you write in complete sentences?
- Can your teacher read it or is it too messy?

Teach Time. One method that is really effective is to teach all students about time. For instance, tell students just how long something should take. Write the estimated time on the board. This will help the fast-moving student realize they have plenty of time and perhaps slow down. It can help your students who have no concept of time understand how much time they have spent on each problem. You can have your student write a start time and a finish time.

Work with the Student. Based on your observations, you may need to make some modifications. For instance, you may need to break the student's work down into small chunks to help teach the student to work in a slow, steady pace. You may need to work on boosting his confidence or teaching foundational skills. Sometimes students rush through work because they feel that they were going to "fail it anyway" so why put any effort into anything. Understanding that meaning makes a huge difference.

Questions? Contact our **Instructional Coach Sue** at susan@stepuptutoring.org