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Self-Regulation in a Kindergarten Classroom

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Self-Regulation in a Kindergarten Classroom

by

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A Starred Paper

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Self-regulation is a topic on a teacher's mind especially when they meet their new kindergarteners every fall. Most of the time this is the first exposure they have meeting the expectations of adults outside of the family's home. Kindergartners need the knowledge to operate independently to help make appropriate choices within the school setting (Menzies & Lane, 2011). This indicates one way to improve the climate of the classroom and the teacher and student relationship to be proactive using methods of self-regulation before behavior is out of control. Being proactive benefits the classroom environment, academic learning, and the learning of others (Matthews, Morrison, & Ponitz, 2009).

Purpose of My Study

When choosing my topic, I reflected on my past 6 years in the kindergarten setting and what would benefit my students and myself the most. Self-regulation is a research topic that would give me tools, assessment ideas for data collections for interventions, and develop a better understanding of the topic. In order to reach my students in the best most successful way that I can, I need to provide an environment for every student to have self-regulation for themselves and toward their peers. This past year, I experienced a kindergartener that would often make noises during lessons, run around the classroom during learning time, sit upside down, glue materials to himself and furniture, and come in contact with others when his body was in full speed. All year I came up with interventions to support his learning and help him control his body. Some days it was a success and some days I was exhausted. I was very intrigued by this individual's characteristics and this led me to my research topic of self-regulation. I want to dig deeper into the topic to have a better understanding of why some kids come to kindergarten with

limited self-regulation. I also want to explore how I can reach my students with more positive outcomes and with appropriate tools as their teacher to role model the correct expectations. I also want to develop a system that I can apply in my classroom from the very beginning of every school year to have a positive classroom climate and help students be aware of the choices that they make. When students have limited self-regulatory skills, it interferes with their learning, their peers learning, creates a negative classroom environment that may be unsafe, and it limits the teacher's control of classroom management.

By doing this starred paper, my expectations are that I will support my students' academic growth. It will also help me understand some of the behaviors or situations that I experience almost on a daily from my 5- and 6-year-old students. I truly love my job and want to support my students by learning more about self-regulation because the trend that I have observed is that the number of students entering school are lacking self-regulatory behaviors more and more each year. I hope to find successful strategies to help support my students as they enter their schooling years in kindergarten and set them up for success for the years to come. My plan of action will determine the tools to use with students and when they are necessary. My own determination will also set the growth mind-set of my kindergarten students to be independent self-regulators.

These strategies have led me into the following starred paper questions to explore. These questions support my own growth as an educator and my student's success in my kindergarten classroom.

Starred paper questions I explored:

1. How can a kindergarten student effectively self-regulate?

   When a student can successfully self-regulate, this leads into the second question of the environment as a whole.

2. What are the positive effects of a self-regulated kindergartner?

   By having a self-regulated classroom, teachers can play a large role on how to move forward positively.

3. How can teachers support self-regulation in their classroom setting?

   An ongoing strategy with the teacher's support will prevent future situations and positive learning outcomes.

4. What strategies are highly effective for a kindergarten student to self-regulate behavior?

While monitoring what strategies are used, the most and effective strategies will be beneficial for future kindergartners.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

What is Self-Regulation?

Self-regulation is a large topic that covers many processes for students to learn and regulate their body and behavior (Zimmerman, 1989). Zimmerman defined it as the degree that students are metacognitive, motivationally, and behaviorally active participants in their own learning process. In my words, it is the ability to 'control' one's behavior, emotions, actions, thoughts, and monitor it. He also stated that self-regulation is a product of both self-generated and external sources of influences contributing to the outcome. In kindergarten-friendly terms, it may be stated as out of control behavior. Below is a visual diagram of the effects and main contributions of self-regulation (Zimmerman, 1989).

Figure 1

Effects and Contributions of Self-Regulation
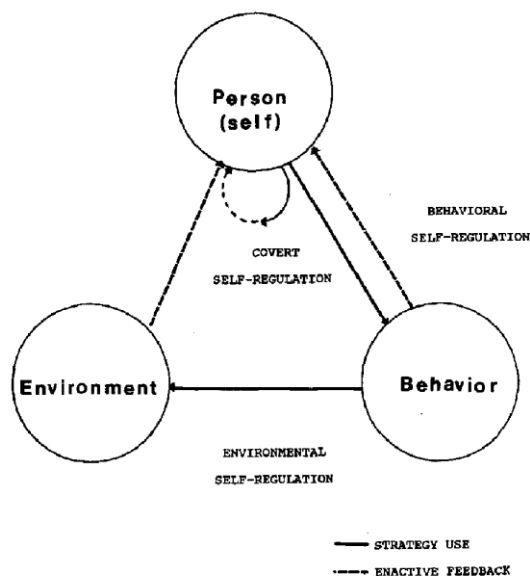
As Figure 1 indicates, a child's experiences, environment, and individual self, plays an ongoing impact on one's self-regulation. It is a continuum that needs positive behavior modeled and a successful classroom environment to change a student's behavior and learn regulatory strategies efficiently (Zimmerman, 1989).

What Does Self-Regulation Look Like in a
 Kindergarten Setting?

In kindergarten we are learning lots of new things and experiencing the school setting for the very first time for most students. Our learning includes lots of foundational skills to apply for the years to come. Self-regulation uses many cognitive skills that are still developing to have behavioral control in school (Matthews et al., 2009). In kindergarten we need to pay attention/focus or we miss a lot of important directions and rules. I often have students repeat after me what the directions are so I know that they heard me and can carry it forward. In kindergarten, we also use regulation with our peers. This includes many daily strategies such as: sharing, having conversations, resolving conflicts, problem-solving and emotional control. I think that kindergarteners are identifying their independent selves and by role modeling by the teacher, that positive influence can go a long way. When entering kindergarten, I think that a kindergartner needs to be able to communicate their needs or wants. This skill carries over into following directions, sharing ideas, and emotionally being sensitive to others' feelings. Some days these concepts are tough! Self-regulation in a kindergarten setting also includes: how to use talking voices, how to wait one's turn, how to sit, stand or move around as expected, how to ask for help, how to care for others and materials, how to work independently, and how to problem-solve (Pelco & Reed-Victor, 2007). I refer to my classroom as a family, which builds togetherness and builds trust to be successful learners. By having all of the above in the

kindergarten setting, academic achievement improves, and the climate of the classroom is more positive and warm.

Why Do We Need Self-Regulation?

In a perfect classroom, everyone is smiling and applying themselves 100% while paying attention and retaining everything being presented to them. This is not reality unfortunately and students come to school all unique and different. I have experienced students with lots of 'baggage' and experiences that they should never have to experience in their little minds. Some negative behaviors stem from negative influences, home life situations, past trauma, and the lack of self-regulation experiences. I have learned from my 14 years of teaching that children thrive on structure, consistency, and well-predictable environments. When I can provide these things, I can reach my students better and receive better academic outcomes. Another main source of reaching my young students is trust. I have to role model and be a trustworthy adult before they can perform comfortably in my classroom setting as expected. Trust is a key to a child's success in my classroom family.

Self-regulation is a necessity in any classroom setting because without it there are many negative outcomes. In the early years it is essential for a student's successful development, setting the academic base, and it sets the pattern for work habits and social interactions throughout their schooling experiences (Menzies & Lane, 2011). Early interventions and learning about self-regulation will have a better social and academic outcome in the schooling experience furthermore in careers in the future. Self-regulation is also important to have for positive relationships with teachers and peers (Menzies & Lane, 2011). It is important to be able to identify when self-regulation is absent. After it is identified, then a collection of data is

necessary to determine why, when, or how it is happening. For example, misbehaving or out of control during learning time. Some students seek positive reinforcement attention and others need approaching on other negative reinforcement. Lastly, an intervention can take place to support this student and recognize their own behavior and choices. Many articles that I reviewed included the assessment tool called HTKS (Head-Shoulders-Knees-Toes). HTKS is a brief assessment on self-regulation for 4-6-year-olds, that children complete using four paired behavioral commands presented by the examiner. For example, touch your head, touch your shoulders, touch your knees, and touch your toes. The student responds naturally and then completes the task by doing the opposite of what is asked. According to Hee, Xu, and Krieg (2016), their study is to use multiple aspects of behavioral self-regulation as it directs children to pay attention to the instructions, use working memory to recall the multiple task rules while executing a response and use the use of correct response. The use of HTKS can help identify students who struggle with self-regulation to receive interventions or extra help to support them. Overall, self-regulation is essential to have a well-built classroom community of young learners at the kindergarten level. It helps with the flow of the day, social relationships and academic achievement.

How Do We Teach Self-Regulation?

Teachers play a very critical role Graziano, Slae, Ros, Garb, Hart, and Garcia (2015), early childhood teachers play an important role in helping kids learn to regulate thinking and behavior because the students are learning the foundational skills for self-regulation for the first five years of life. Teachers are an essential role model for the children that they are teaching. Training for self-regulation can start with teachers themselves, then preparing to teach it to their

students. Perels, Merget-Kullmann, Wende, Schmitz, and Buchbinder (2009) stated that,

"Kindergarten teachers need to be prepared to help children to learn how to learn, to organize

their knowledge and to solve problems" (p. 325). Teacher training is a big step to start the

positive cycle of self-regulation. The opportunities should also be ongoing as the responsibility

of the teacher. Perry, Vandekamp, Mercer, and Nordby (2002) stated that a great deal of

scaffolded instruction will help support students through themselves and peers. Teachers also

need to provide an environment that is comfortable and safe for all students. This would include

opportunities to share feelings and make positive choices. The layout and classroom

arrangement are also included in that. Lastly, I think that movement is important for the

kindergarten age to release some energy and have brain breaks. A teacher can regulate when it is

necessary and appropriate to implement movement activities into the kindergarten schedule.

Another form of teaching self-regulation is through curriculum. There are many

supportive curriculums and programs to teach students ways to express themselves, cognitively

have self-control and emotionally with behavior. The SELF (Social-Emotional-Learning-

Foundations') curriculum is a supported and successful tool to apply to a kindergarten classroom

to cover many social-emotional topics. As Daunic et al. (2013) stated in her research, "Deficient

self-regulation, in turn, has been linked to deficits in executive function" (p. 43). These practices

include behavioral self-regulation in both social-emotional and academic learning. The SELF

covers five social-emotional topics: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness,

relationship management and responsible decision-making. These units are kindergarten friendly

including read-alouds, vocabulary, repeated read-alouds, small group discussions using prior

knowledge, and role playing. During the lessons, concepts are used like turn taking, modeling,

recalling vocabulary and engagement in conversations. One strategy used is a 'breathe and think' strategy where you wait before you speak. This teaches children self-control and confidence in their sharing.

In addition, another form of teaching self-regulation is through play and movement. In kindergarten using our imaginations and interactions with others helps develop important social skills. As Ostroff (2014) stated, "Rather than trying to get children to stop fidgeting, we should embrace their tendency to move as a prerequisite for developing focus" (p. 70). In my teaching experience in a kindergarten classroom, brain breaks are important and provide a much needed 'refill' before moving on in learning. This also gives students a tool for the language of their needs. For example, I feel stressed. I have a lot of energy. Through play and interactions, students may apply from the role modeling of the teacher and their peers how to have successful relationships.

There are many successful exercises to use in a kindergarten classroom to support students that need self-regulation guidance. One example is 'belly breathing.' This is where students place a beanbag on their bellies and watch it rise and fall. It supports the refocusing of their bodies (Graziano et al., 2015). Another strategy is 'counting backwards' to provide muscle relaxation. In my experience, there are many resources online to support 'cooling down' and relaxation. Recess is also important to have students take care of their emotional and physical needs to refocus back to learning time. Self-talk is an approach that was supported in many researched articles to be a successful intervention for self-regulatory students. This is the technique of using internal language to approach a problem, reflections or actions/thoughts. It

can also be presented as a self-encouragement to oneself. In my classroom I have also used Yoga, music/movement songs, aerobics, and calming music to set the environment tone.

Limitations in My Research

I have chosen action research to compare different strategies that authors have researched in the articles that I have found. My topic of interest has many supported research articles to gather information on self-regulation at the primary level. I have found many studies with alike topics for kindergarten more specifically. As I move forward, I have found that there are only qualitative methods for my age of students due to many factors. For example, observations are the most common assessment that I have concluded from articles, along with interviews. This is due to the lack of reading and writing skills that kindergartners can independently complete by themselves. I also think that kindergarten is the first schooling experience for most students, and they come with a variety of backgrounds, knowledge, and experiences. With the variety of demographics, the research is hard to conclude in the fall of kindergarten and the growth throughout the kindergarten year. I have experienced in my 6 years of teaching kindergarten that it is a unique age for many reasons. The foundational skills are growing tremendously throughout the year and students are learning how to be independent learners. This becomes an issue with research because the question arises: Is it developmentally appropriate for students to have all the tools and knowledge to self-regulate themselves in kindergarten? My direction of study will continue to find supported tools or curriculum to have a self-regulated classroom and support my students as a role model as their classroom teacher.

Chapter 3: Action Research

Demographics

The action research that I implemented in my kindergarten classroom took place over the course of 4 months. It started in September of 2019 and continued ongoing to December of 2019. The elementary school I work in is located in the upper Midwest. The school has a population of 32% free-reduced lunch. The school has a total of seven sections of full-day kindergarten. My classroom consists of 25 students with 14 male students and 11 female students. The students' ages range from 5 years old to 6 years old. Of the 25 students, four students receive IEP services for developmental delays and/or speech services. Of my 25 students, one student is ELL. In my kindergarten classroom, I have an educational assistant that assists a student for academic needs and is in my classroom about 50% of the day with supports. The other 50% of the school day I am the only educator in the classroom with my students. Prior coming to kindergarten, 14 of my 25 students attended a preschool setting for 1-2 years from the ages of 3 years old to 4 years old.

Methods

When I started researching self-regulation, I found many theories and tested studies that I could implement into my kindergarten classroom. The one that caught my attention the most was using a strategy to create self-regulation for my students but that did not interfere with my teaching. I wanted to create an environment in my classroom that was calming and worked on the independence aspect of my kindergartners. I also wanted to increase their motivation and improve themselves to self-regulate if necessary. It would give them what they need to self-regulate and return to learning to give me what I need to teach 25 students and have positive

classroom management. My goal was to have my action plan focus on me and how self-regulating can improve my lessons without distractions in my classroom. I considered the process model (Perels, 2009) for the early stages of cognitive development and self-regulation.

Figure 2

Process Model of Self-Regulation
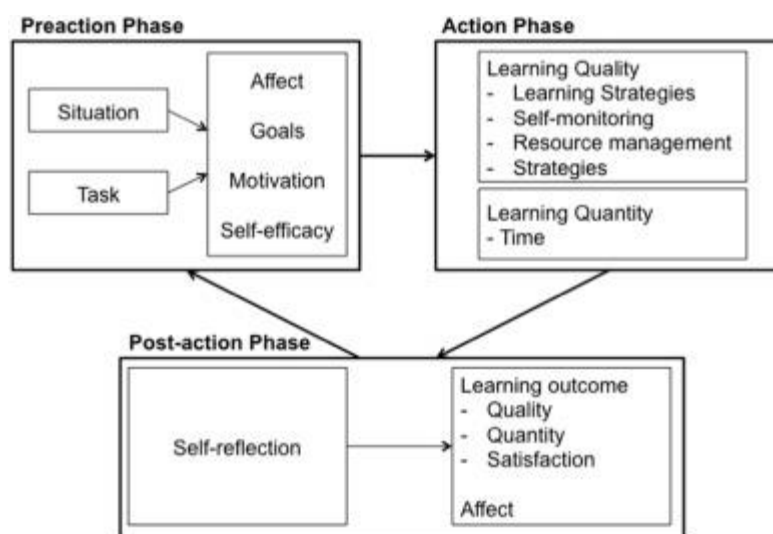
(Perels, 2009, p. 313)

Using Perels et al. (2009) model, I narrowed it down to what is age-appropriate for a kindergartner and how it will look in my classroom. As stated in my review of literature, modeling what is expected is a huge part of my method to bring self-regulation into effect from the beginning of the school year. The pre-action phase will be a lot of using the language of self-regulation. This will include discussions in a whole group stating to kindergartners the goals of using self-regulation tools. It will also be teaching the vocabulary terms: self-regulation, belly-breathing, self-talk, and the breathing ball. Along with the goals, I will build motivation within

my students to really want to become in control of one's body to receive the best learning. My

action phase will be teaching and modeling the self-regulation strategies to every learner

repeatedly every school day for 1-2 months as needed by observing the student's responses. The

post-action phase will be the independent stage of my kindergartners. They will use the self-

regulation station to independently self-regulate and return to learning. This is where my

kindergartners will reflect and think of themselves and impulsivities that they have experienced.

Figure 3

My Research Put into Action

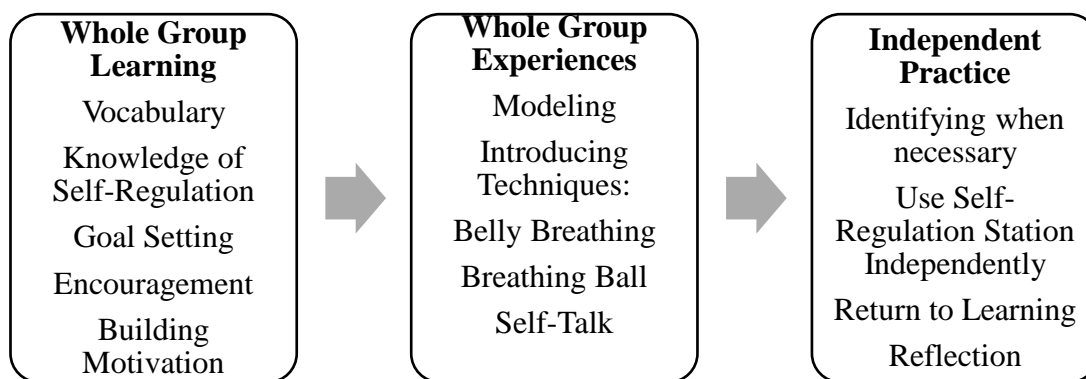| Whole Group Learning	Whole Group Experiences	Independent Practice
Vocabulary	Modeling	Identifying when necessary
Knowledge of Self-Regulation	Introducing Techniques:	Use Self-Regulation Station Independently
Goal Setting	Belly Breathing	Return to Learning
Encouragement	Breathing Ball	Reflection
Building Motivation	Self-Talk	

Figure 3 shows my goals and hopeful outcomes of applying self-regulation into my

classroom. This would improve my control of the lessons I am teaching and creating a working

memory of the classroom rules while engaged in a classroom activity (Hee et al., 2016).

The process that I have developed in Figure 3, supports the research by using role playing

and a great deal of teacher modeling for students to acknowledge positive examples to follow. It

also offers choices where a kindergartner feels that they have control of what self-regulating tool

they use but both choices are the correct ones. Students will have the support of me to encourage

them and help them identify when they need to self-regulate while learning the cues of their own body. This method will start as a whole-group learning activity, but may not be necessary for all students when it moves into independent practice because some students have multiple cognitive skills prior to starting kindergarten with the capability to self-regulate independently.

In my classroom, the self-regulate station will be located in the front corner of the room away from the central learning areas that we transition to throughout our lessons. It will be for independent practice and will include the following learning tools. A 2-minute sand timer will be there to time the maximum amount of time I prefer a student to self-regulate to prevent missed learning time. There will also be a basket with a breathing ball. This tool is used by the student by breathing in when expanding and breathing out when exhaling as the ball is shrinking. This represents our bodies filling with air and releasing air. Students have a cushioned big chair to relax on while using the breathing ball. There will also be a bean bag for belly breathing. Students will lay flat on their backs and place the beanbag on their tummy while watching it rise and fall as they take 10 deep breathes. The goal of these tools is to focus on breathing and having control of the breathing within the body. These techniques support the research of offering choices and opportunities to continue progressing on their own (Perry et al., 2002).

In my action research, I will use data collection using observations on the number of students that use the self-regulation station with my prompting, use it independently, and if it effectively changed the student's attention on learning. I will collect this information with a recording sheet that I have created to document every student that regulates and if they return to learning successfully self-regulated. With the outcome that the working memory and self-control is positive when they return to my academic lessons. With the collected data, I can determine if

my students demonstrate higher levels of success academically then previous years and reflect if

my student's self-regulation benefits me as a teacher and my positive classroom environment.

Figure 4

Data Collection Recording Sheet

Self-Regulating Strategies

Student/Date	Technique	Successful Transition Back?

Findings

Overall, my collected data over the span of 2 months was very interesting to me. I

looked very closely at my findings and noticed a few variables that played a large role in my

student's self-regulation on a weekly basis. Figure 5 shows the number of students that

independently self-regulated, had teacher prompting to self-regulate, and were successful

returning to learning time during the 8 weeks that I implemented my Stage 3 of the process.
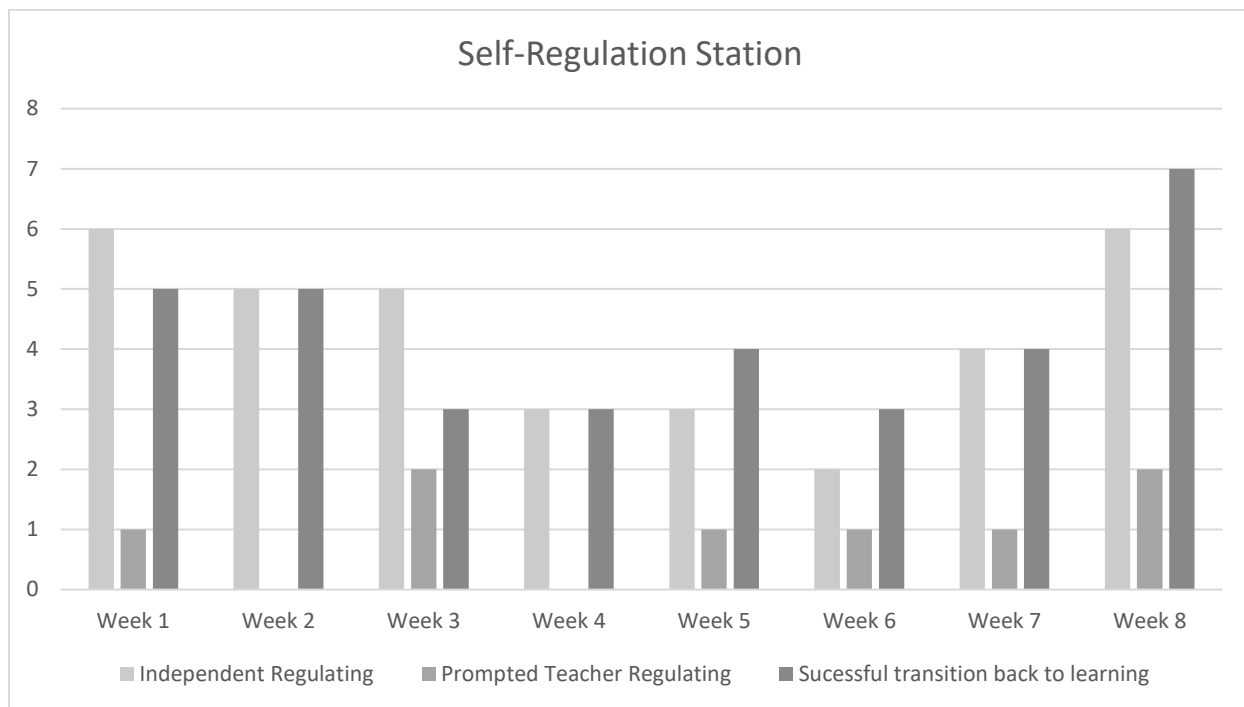
Figure 5

Self-Regulation Station Data Graph

Figure 5 shows a good amount of decreasing the need to self-regulate but then increases

near the end of my study. The amount of independence was greater than the prompting by the

teacher which represents positive outcomes of being self-aware and use self-judgement. The

number of prompted teacher regulated bars are from the same two students throughout the entire

8 weeks. These two students demonstrated significant difficulties sitting still, paying attention,

and knowing the expectations of the lessons. They represented the need for movement breaks as

research states is developmentally appropriate for some children entering kindergarten without

prior cognitive development to meet the needs of the classroom (Ostroff, 2014). The change

from decreasing to increasing self-regulating students have many contributing factors that may affect the outcome of my study.

When I started collecting data for Phase 3 of my study, I started in early November after 7 weeks of whole group modeling and supports. I found in the first week of the transition, it was a new task for students and some students may have not met the criteria to really have the need to self-regulate, even though we discussed what it looked and sounded like. This became a new interest for the students, and I link the higher number of those self-regulating to that new transition. Kindergarten students are very intrigued to new things and especially when they have the independent choice to leave learning to self-regulate and return. After that early stage was passed, I also considered the time of year I conducted my research. I saw great success as shown in Figure 5 the first 4 weeks and then a huge jump in week 8. The consideration that I figured into Week 8 was the time of year it was for my young students. It was the week before holiday break and there was a lot of excitement in the air. I purposely kept the classroom routines in place and presented a calming environment with brain breaks and some whole group belly breathing at times. Naturally, Weeks 5 and 8 were holiday weeks for majority of the students.

Another interesting theory I considered with my data was what days of the week were easier and more difficult to have students self-regulate. Figure 6 represents the total number of students regulating for each school day of the week.
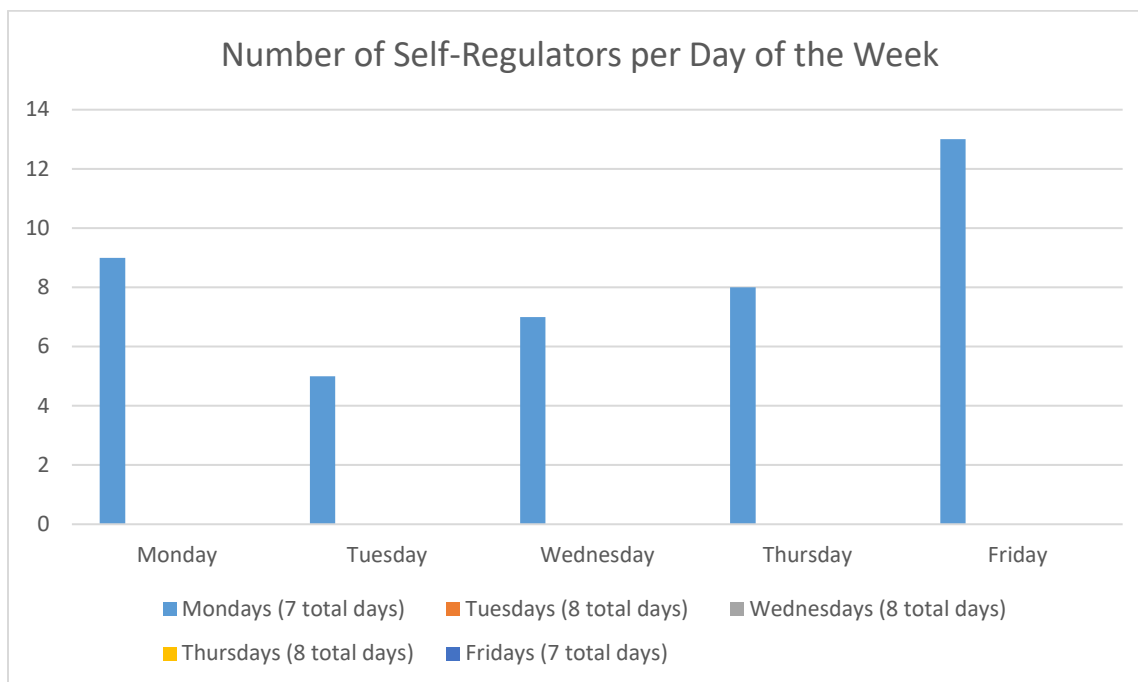
Figure 6

Daily Monitor Graph

Figure 6 shows very interesting facts on what day of the week is the hardest to meet the needs of a kindergarten classroom. By the end of the school week, my students demonstrate being tired, restless, and appear less motivated to learn. For a 5- and 6-year-old going to school for a full day these characteristics are expected and age appropriate. As their teacher, I now have data that helps me reflect on more whole group calming strategies and encouragement toward the end of the week. With Monday's data, I concluded that a slower start to our learning may benefit my student's abilities to focus on learning and increase motivation for the school week.

With all my collected data, it shows an increase in effectiveness of the self-regulating station than prior to starting the research. Depending on the day of the week and time of the school year, students can successfully self-regulate to return to learning. This also increases their

independent skills as stated in one of my goals when starting my research. This supports an increase in positive relationship with classroom peers and the teacher. As identified in the research, it also helps students think about a task or action beforehand, monitor his/her performance and reflect (Menzies et al., 2012).

Discussions

  Starred Paper Question #1: How can a kindergarten student effectively self-regulate? A kindergarten student can effectively self-regulate 85% of the time that they use the self-regulation station. This includes using the belly breathing method and breathing ball method. Prior to using the station, 8 weeks of modeling and whole group lessons on self-regulation are necessary to familiarize students with the purpose of the station and introduce needed vocabulary and self-awareness of one's actions. With support of the teacher, a kindergartner can increase their knowledge of what self-control looks and feels like.

  Starred Paper Question #2: What are the positive effects of a self-regulated kindergartner? A positive effect of a self-regulated kindergartner is focused around myself and my academic lessons. With a self-regulated class of kindergartners, I can have the full attention of my students without distractions or having to stop my lessons to help an individual regroup their body. A big effect would be the total amount of learning increasing and data shown on assessments improving from full classroom learning time. When a student knows how to self-regulate using the self-regulating station, they are also modeling for their peers what it looks like to gain self-control. My classroom has an increased positive environment when my student's bodies are in control and students are fully engaged in their learning.

Starred Paper Question #3: How can teachers support self-regulation in their classroom setting? I supported self-regulation in my classroom by first presenting it to my entire class and not just individual students that I thought could benefit from it. We practiced it and I modeled it for a span of 8 weeks to demonstrate it. The language we used became part of our daily routines and became normal kindergarten talk. When students needed my support to recognize that they need to use the self-regulation station, I guided them there to get them started and return to teaching. I was purposeful of where the station was located and what tools they could use. I did not want to provide too many choices, but I wanted the students to feel that they were making the choice of how to regulate their own actions. My students that currently use the self-regulating station are working with me to fix the areas that are most alarming with my guidance and reminders of when it is occurring to self-evaluate their actions. I am also teaching them the next step of self-talk to stop and reflect on their whole-body's level of control. I also support all of my kindergartners by doing whole group self-regulation activities throughout the week like research suggested, by providing activities include movement breaks, whole group belly breathing, and extra recess or play to fulfill those refocusing needs with a break (Ostroff, 2014).

Starred Paper Question #4: What strategies are highly effective for a kindergarten student to self-regulate behavior? The strategies that I put into action for my research, I found very effective with the prerequisite of lots of modeling before a student uses it independently. My findings from observing students while using the breathing ball were that they really focused on the ball itself and not their surroundings when they breathed. They had a concrete model of their tummy filling up with air and shrinking when releasing the air. This kept their hands busy,

mouths busy, and eyes busy to concentrate on breathing. Students appeared engaged and used

this learning tool correctly majority of the time. The second tool I used was the belly breathing

method using a bean bag. This also kept the students engaged by laying down, so their bodies

were grounded. They also kept their focus on the bean bag to watch it rise with exhaling and fall

with inhaling. Their hands were flat on the floor next to their bodies. After using these tools,

students then could self-monitor and ask themselves: Am I ready to return to learning and is my

body calm and in control? This is based around the research of self-talk (Matthews et al., 2009).

Whole group breaks are an effective method with the entire class working to release energy to

refocus onto the next lesson of learning.

Conclusions

Self-regulation is a challenging skill to assess in kindergarten with all the factors that may

play a role in the outcomes. Some things that I found challenging were the days of the week and

times of the day that impacted if a kindergartner could self-regulate. It also mattered on the

individual child. Every school year may be different from the year prior, depending on the

background of my students and the experiences that they bring to school. I have learned that

individuals have different needs and the self-regulating station worked for most but two of my

students are continuing to demonstrate difficulties controlling their bodies which interfere with

their level of learning. In theory, the students who successfully made it back to the lessons that I

was teaching became more successful in their learning. This makes it easier and less challenging

for the teacher without distractions or having to stop to redirect students.

Another factor that makes self-regulating challenging to monitor is the individual

backgrounds and characteristics of every student. In kindergarten, students are of the ages 5

years old and 6 years old. The 1-year difference looks very different in boys' vs girls and in my younger students. The maturity levels are all very different. I observed that students tend to copy others if they are seeking positive or negative attention themselves. There may not be a direct way that self-regulation works for an entire group without individualizing practices for those that need it most. The repeated modeling and exposure of the self-regulating tools will impact most students who are emotionally ready to self-talk and use the tools appropriately.

Based on my research and how I applied it, it has impacted the independence of my kindergartners in my classroom. The need to self-regulate has decreased and more learning is occurring. I do not have 100% of my kindergartners self-regulated due to the difference in backgrounds and developmental levels of each student. My lessons have increased in the amount of time I can have the whole group's attention without disruptions and students are focused more. I feel it has become a good routine as needed for my students and only little prompting is needed due to the fact that we have been doing the self-regulation station all school year.

In the fall, I can apply the same strategies to my new group of kindergartners and target those who appear to need it more even sooner in the school year. I would repeat the amount of needed modeling for 6-8 weeks and the vocabulary to familiarize students with self-regulating and why. Reflecting on the data and the increase toward the end of the week, I would build in more whole group self-regulating and brain breaks to be proactive for those tired and restless students on a Friday. I can also add visuals to the self-regulation station. These would be of my students who would benefit the most from self-regulating with themselves in control in a positive way to motivate them. Every year is different and like my lessons, I would differentiate the

needs of my students to fit in self-regulation when I get to know my students well and develop a trusting relationship with them in the fall.

The impact of my research in my learning environment is positive because we accomplish more in our learning with limited distractions. I can also have the attention of majority of the students with limited distractions from students unable to self-regulate. It also has set up a calming environment where students are relaxed and focused without another student bumping into them or being loud. As a teacher, I can set aside more of my time supporting students with academics and less on behavior when my students are regulated. My classroom is a busy place and no 2 days are the same, but I think without the self-regulating station I would have less control of my 25 students and they would not have the tools to know how to self-monitor their bodies for future years in the school environment.

Recommendations

Research indicated that in Figure 1, the student's experiences play a large factor in the role of a student to be able to self-regulate (Zimmerman, 1989). The student as a whole and their environment are also a large impact. This is a large barrier to teachers due to the fact that we cannot change the home environment, but we can become that trusting adult that believes in students at school. In my research, I did not reach out to my student's families to help increase self-regulating skills. I would recommend that in the future and I would send home a description of what each learning tool is. This may include videos of students using the station and modeling it. Research shows that the more exposure to something, the more likely a student will have it become a positive habit or routine. For my research, I wanted to focus on my interaction with my students and increase learning time for all my students.

Another recommendation I would consider in a self-regulating kindergarten classroom is collecting more data from the beginning of the research. At the beginning of the school year a parent questionnaire could be an option to consider. This would be used to get more background knowledge on each individual's qualities that they will be coming to school with. This may include prior experiences, the ability to focus on tasks, and the ability to be independent on self-awareness decisions at home. This information would help prepare the teacher for the needs of the students since they vary so much. Another beginning of the year option would be to conduct the assessment tool the HTKS (Hee et al., 2016). This would identify the strugglers early on in the learning, to really focus on the interventions needs for these individuals at the self-regulating station early on to support them.

Self-regulation is a huge part of a kindergarten classroom. It is unique in the way it is presented by 5- and 6-year-old students due to the various backgrounds that children carry with them to kindergarten. Less than half of students have no schooling experience or demands of having to regulate themselves 7 hours of the day. From the limitations of my research stated prior to my action research, there are no solid ways to test a kindergartner if they are self-regulated besides observations and non-formal data collection. The most important tools that you can give the students is providing a positive classroom environment, modeling self-control, and supporting each student's qualities to improve their independence in becoming a self-regulated student for years to come.

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