Chapter 6

Lesson 4: Academic Self-Management

THE "WATCH" ASSIGNMENT PLANNING STRATEGY

This lesson introduces a self-management strategy called "WATCH" (Glomb, 1988; Glomb & West, 1990). This strategy is designed to help students plan how they will complete long-term assignments. By long-term assignments, we mean assignments that are due several days or weeks in the future. For example, book reports, term papers, and speeches are usually assigned weeks before the due date. The completion of chapter assignments is usually given several days in advance. Students are usually more successful with these types of assignments if they organize how they will approach them and plan ahead. The "WATCH" strategy is not for use with daily assignments (i.e., those due the same day or the next day). The letters of the acronym "WATCH" stand for steps in the strategy, and students will learn (1) what the letters stand for and (2) how to do the "W," the "A." and the "T" steps of the strategy. Students will also learn the "CH" part of the acronym and the accompanying "CAN" strategy. The "WATCH" assignment planner has been designed to be used with this strategy. Please read this lesson carefully and prepare all necessary materials before beginning instruction with your students.

Goal

The goal of this lesson is to help students begin to be responsible for completing their academic assignments accurately and neatly by planning and organizing their academic work with the use of the "WATCH" strategy. To accomplish this, students will be taught to identify specific requirements for their assignments and schedule their academic work on the "WATCH" assignment planner.

Objectives

At the end of this lesson, your students will be able to

(1) make an accurate, written record on the assignment planner of all assignments given by their teachers. They should record due dates, format, and other requirements that must be met in order to complete the assignment correctly and on time.

^{*} Nancy Glomb was a co-author of this chapter.

- (2) use self-instructions to determine if they need to clarify what is required or ask for assistance. Then, if needed, use the appropriate social skills to ask for clarification or assistance.
- (3) analyze the assignment and determine the tasks that must be completed. Then schedule the tasks on the assignment planner so they will be accomplished over the days available.
- (4) Explain what self-management skills each letter represents in the "WATCH" and "CAN" strategies.

Materials Prepare the following materials in advance.

(1) For Step 2: Introduction and rationale, write the "WATCH" acronym on the board (or on a poster, transparency, etc.) as follows:

WATCH

Write down the assignment, the due date, and any special requirements for the assignment.

Ask yourself if you understand the assignment, and ask for clarification or help if necessary.

Task analyze the assignment and schedule the tasks over the days available to complete the assignment.

CHeck each task as you do it for completeness, accuracy, and neatness.

- (2) For Step 2: Introduction and rationale,
 - Step 4: Student practice and discussion, and
 - Step 5: Student evaluation, make 10 copies of the blank assignment planner (Figure 6-1 or 6-2) for each student.
- (3) For Step 3: Discrimination training, make one copy of Figures 6-3, 6-4, 6-5, and 6-6.

Step 1 Review

- A. Review the Antecedent (trigger)—Behavior— Consequence relationship with your students.
- B. Review the students' progress during the behavior rating practices. An example of how you might present this to your students is as follows:

So far, you have learned to analyze your behavior into "triggers," how you behave in response to those triggers, and what happens as a result of your behavior. You've been monitoring your behavior by rating yourself and monitoring your ratings with me and you've been getting H's and S's for several days now.

Step 2 Introduction and Rationale

- Introduction. Instruct the students that they will be Α. learning a strategy to help them plan and organize their academic assignments; specifically, they will learn how to use an assignment planner to schedule and monitor their work, so that they finish their work on time and according to the requirements for each assignment. Give a blank copy of the assignment planner to each student (Figure 6-1). Explain to students that this assignment planner is to be used with a strategy called "WATCH" (point to the board or posterboard) that will help them organize and monitor their assignments. Before discussing each step (or letter) of this strategy, point to the column of boxes under the heading "Citizenship Points" on the assignment planner. [Note: If you are not using the citizenship points, Figure 6-2 provides a copy of the assignment planner without citizenship points or grades.] Tell the students that they will continue to give themselves a citizenship grade in the boxes in the column on the top box of the assignment planner. Tell them that during today's lesson, they will be learning the WATCH strategy.
- B. Rationale. Explain to students that many of the reasons they give you for not handing in assignments or for doing them incorrectly can be avoided by learning to use the WATCH strategy. Provide some examples that you know will be relevant to your students. For example

Many of you tell me that you didn't know what you were supposed to do on an assignment, or when I take

Figure 6-1

Friday: ______I C/A/N

Week of:	to Assignment	WATCH Planner and		
Assignment:				
Special Requirements	a. Due Date b c d e Do 1 unde			
	Do I need	to Ask for Help?		Total
Monday:		I C/A/N		
Wednesday: Thursday:		I C/A/N]
-				
Special Special Requirements	a. Due Date b c d			•
	Do I unde	rstand the assignmen to Ask for Help?		
Monday:		I C/A/N	Watch/ Points	Total
]
Thursday:		I C/A/N]
Figure 6-2	•			

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points off for using the wrong kind of paper, you tell me you forgot, or the day an assignment is due, you tell me you forgot about it. This strategy, if you use it, will help you organize your work and keep a record of those kinds of things so that you don't forget.

Explain to students that writing down assignments, breaking them up into small tasks, scheduling those tasks over the time available to do the assignment, and using this written plan to self-monitor task completion are exactly what many people do when they use commercially available appointment books or daily planners to keep track of things they have to do on the job. Point out to students that this strategy will be something they can use in a variety of situations beyond the classroom.

- C. **Explain WATCH**. Give a blank WATCH Assignment Planner to each student, and explain that each letter corresponds to something that they will do on the planner.
 - a. The "W" refers to the areas labeled "Assignment" and "Special Requirements." Special requirements refer to the way teachers expect them to do the assignment, such as writing in pen, not ripping pages out of a spiral-bound notebook, or writing at least a full page, etc.
 - b. The "A" refers to the box that says, "Do I Understand the Assignment?" and "Do I Need to Ask for Help?" Explain to students that they should always ask themselves these questions to make sure they know what it is they are to do. If they understand the assignment completely, they should check the first box. If they need to ask for help, they should check the second box and get assistance from the teacher before they move on.
 - c. The "T" refers to the days of the week. Explain to students that it's easier to complete big assignments if they break them up into smaller tasks. If they have a paper due on Friday about the Civil War, and the assignment was given on the previous Friday, they might want to assign themselves smaller assignments to do each day, such as getting a book from the library on Saturday, reading about it on Mon-

day, writing a rough draft on Tuesday, writing a final copy on Wednesday, and typing it on Thursday.

d. The "CH" refers to the "C/A/N" next to each day, or task. When they complete each task, they should double-check to make sure it's complete ("C"), accurately done ("A"), and neat ("N"). When they've checked their work for each of these things, they should draw a line through each letter as a reminder that they've done the check.

Step 3 Discrimination Training

Present students with examples and non-examples of the correct way to use the assignment planners; examples and non-examples are presented below. If you feel that the examples provided are not relevant to your class, you may want to write your own assignments and corresponding assignment planners.

Explain that you are going to read some assignments to them, and you want them to determine if the student who filled out the Assignment Planner for each assignment followed the "W," "A," and "T" steps of the strategy. Give the "Math problems" example (Figure 6.3) to the student and read the following:

For your math assignment this week, I want you to do all the problems at the end of Chapters 8 through 11. Your work should be done in pencil and all work must be shown. Points will be taken off for messy eraser marks. This assignment is due on Friday of this week.

Give the "English" assignment planner (Figure 6.4) to the student and read the following:

For English, you will write a one-page paper on what you plan to do when you leave high school. It has to be typed. This assignment is due on Wednesday.

When discussion of the two appropriate examples is completed, give the "Action stories" WATCH Assignment Planner (Figure 6.5) and a blank WATCH Assignment Planner to the students. Ask students to write the assignment correctly on a blank assignment planner as you read the following:

By Friday of this week, I want you to read three action stories, answer the questions at the end of each story, and put the written answers in your folders for me to grade. Please use looseleaf paper, not torn-out pages from your spiral-bound notebooks, and write in pen. When you are done reading the assignment, discuss with the students why this is a poor example of the use of the planner. Go through the "W," "A," and "T" steps of the strategy and ask students whether the step has been done. For example, you should point out to students that important information about the above assignment, such as "answer questions at the end of each story," "use looseleaf paper," and "write in pen," have been left out of the special requirements sections. Ask students to identify other information that has been left out. Give the "Social Studies" WATCH Assignment Planner (Figure 6-6) and a blank WATCH Assignment Planner to the students. Ask students to write the assignment correctly on a blank assignment planner as you read the following:

To prepare for your social studies test on Friday, I want you to answer the questions at the end of Unit 2. There are 20 questions. Write your answers in pen on looseleaf paper and hand them in to me during class on Wednesday.

Using the C/A/N Strategy

Explain to the students that you are going to teach them how to add the C/A/N strategy to the WATCH Assignment Planner. The purpose of the C/A/N strategy is to help the students remember to check their work before they hand it in. The students should check their work to make sure that it is complete, accurate, and neat. "C/A/N" is an acronym used to remind students to check those three aspects of their assignments. Tell students that it is important for them to do this because those are the things that teachers grade students on. It is not enough to hand something in if it is sloppy, not complete, or done incorrectly. It is important that the students actually sit down with the completed assignment and carefully evaluate the completeness, accuracy, and neatness of the assignment, and check it off on the WATCH Assignment Planner. The teacher may need to provide some examples and nonexamples of work that is not complete, accurate, or neat and help the students discriminate between assignments that are acceptable and those that are not. This is an important step in using the WATCH strategy and, as a teacher, vou should use as much time as necessary to ensure that students can complete this part of the evaluation process.

When you have finished reading the assignment, discuss which steps of the "WATCH" strategy have been completed and which steps have been left out. Ask students to identify information that should be on the planner.

Step 4 Student Practice and Discussion

Provide students with three or four blank assignment planners. Read the assignments that you have prepared on Figure 6.7 and ask the students to complete the "W-A-T" steps. Check each student's work and provide positive corrective feedback.

Step 5 Student Evaluation

Provide students with an additional blank assignment planner. For evaluation of student performance on this lesson, create additional assignments to read to the students (Figure 6-8). Additional examples are provided in Figure 6-9. Read the assignments and ask students to plan the assignment using the "W-A-T" steps. Do not provide corrective feedback during the completion of the assignment. This step will provide you with an indication of how well students understand the strategy. If students are having difficulty at this point, go back through the lesson with them until they are able to plan a lesson without your help.

Step 6 Student Assignment

Give an additional assignment planner to the students and instruct them to use it for an assignment in one of their classes. Remind them to use the C/A/N strategy as they do each small task. Ask them to bring it to the next lesson.

Many teachers have found that it is necessary to use positive reinforcement (e.g., points), to motivate students to complete the WATCH Assignment Planner because it takes time and effort. Figure 6-10 presents a point system for reinforcing the use of the WATCH Assignment Planner. Once the student has learned to use the assignment planner and can do it quickly, the external reinforcement can be faded out. It may also be helpful for students to know that most successful students (i.e., "A" students) use the same or similar strategies to assist them in planning the completion of their assignments.

Lesson 4: Acaden	nic Self-Management				
	/9_to <u>3/13</u> ASSIGMMONG Do math problems at the e	WATCH Planner and nd of the Chapters 8, 9	Point G	ame: <u>John S</u> arrd	
Special Requirements	a. Due DateFriday bUse pencil cshow all work dno messy eraser mar e	k6	ent?		And the second of the second o
Tuesday: Wednesday Thursday:	o problems for Chapter 8 lo problems for Chapter 9 do problems for Chapter 10 do problems for Chapter 11 id in all math problems	I C/A/N I C/A/N	Citizenship/ Points	Watch/ Points	Total
Special Special Requirements	d		int?		
Tuesday: Wednesday: Thursday:		I C/A/N I C/A/N I C/A/N I C/A/N	Citizenship/ Points	Watch/ Points	Total

Week of: 3/	o to 3/13 WATCH Name: Jackie C. Assignment Planner and Point Card
Assignment:	Write a paper on what I'm going to do after high school.
Special Requirements	a. Due Date
	Citizenship/ Watch/ Total Points Points
Tuesday:t Wednesday: Thursday:	I C/A/N
Assignment:	
Special Requirements	a. Due Date
	Citizenship/ Watch/ Total Points Points
Tuesday: Wednesday: Thursday:	C/A/N
Figure 6-4: Engl	

Figure 6-5: Action Stories Example

Week of: 3		gmment	WAT(Planne		Point (Name: T.C.	
Assignment	Do social stud	dies questions					
Special Requirements	a. Due Date		stand the a	assignmer	nt?		
					Citizenship/ Points	Watch/	Total
Tuesday: <u>lo</u> Wednesday Thursday: <u>_</u>	rite in pen oose leaf paper :			C/A/N C/A/N C/A/N			
Assignment							
Special Requirements	a. Due Date b	Do I under	stand the a	assignmer			
			•		Citizenship/ Points	/ Watch/ Points	Total
Tuesday: Wednesday Thursday:	·•		1	C/A/N C/A/N C/A/N			
Figure 6-6: Soc	ial Studies Examp	le					

Student Practice and Discussion

Assignment 1 (Example)					
Today is Monday. By 4th period English on Friday. I want you to have five journal entries in your folder. You can work on them during 2nd hour seatwork time. I want you to write on lined composition paper - no spiral-bound or looseleaf paper with holes. Points will be taken offfor cross-outs or eraser marks. Journal entries must be written in pen.					
Assignment 2					
A animum and 2					
Assignment 3					

Figure 6-7

Student Evaluation

Assignment 1 (Example)	
Assignment 2	
Assignment 3	
	Pa-11111
Assignment 4	
	

Figure 6-8

Examples of Assignments that Can Be Used for Additional Practice or Evaluation

"By Friday, I want you to finish reading Chapter 7 in your American history book and answer the five questions at the end of the chapter. Write answers on looseleaf paper and please write in pen. Neatness counts on this paper, so make sure you don't have any writeovers or scribble marks on your paper."

"You will begin this week to keep a personal journal of things that happen to you during the day. You will write a one-page journal entry for each day of the week in a spiral-bound notebook, and you will hand in the notebook each Friday for me to grade. Write in complete sentences, and you may write in pencil."

"For your social studies assignment, I want you to do a one-page report on a South American country. You will need to go to the library to use the encyclopedia, and you should include the population and when the country was founded. Write your report in pen, and hand it in by next Tuesday."

Figure 6-9

Watch Points and Grade Equivalents

Grade	e	Points
A	All of the WATCh steps have been performed correctly on the Assignment Planner and the completed tasks reflect completeness, accuracy, and neatness.	4
В	All of the WATCh steps have been performed correctly on the Assignment Planner and the completed tasks may have one or two errors, i.e., may be missing a row of math problems, may have one or two messy eraser marks. Generally, however, the assignments conform to the special requirements.	3
C	One of the WATCh steps was performed incorrectly and one or two errors in completeness, accuracy, or neatness have been made.	2
D	Two of the WATCh steps have been performed incorrectly and the assignment or task reflects more than two errors in completeness, accuracy, and neatness.	1
F	The task was not handed in the Assignment Planner was not present, or the students "sluffed."	0

Figure 6-10