

On Track Program

Visual Feedback System

(see Visual Feedback Systems for Comprehension Guides—Program Guidelines)

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On Track Program Guidelines

The On Track Program is a visual feedback program that provides continuous feedback on performance. As is the case with all the visual feedback programs, it is well-suited to helping students figure out the subtleties of teacher expectations. Visual Feedback Systems for Comprehension Guides provides general direction about using these systems and (<https://kevinplummerphd.com/visual-systems-to-increase-motivation-and-support-better-decision-making/>) offers additional direction (and rationale) about visual support systems in general.

The On Track program does not have a comprehension guide to review with the student or a separate routine to reference during the work task. This program is strictly a visual feedback system, much like the Green Zone, but specifically targeting on/off task behavior. This program was originally developed to help children discriminate the following conditions:

- on task making progress
- on task, but making only slow progress
- off task
- off task with an episode

Each condition (student behavioral response) requires an adjustment in the visual feedback system, along with a verbal script. The student can be earning credits (or other tangible reinforcement) when on task, or the system can be used as just a "first/then" program where the student can engage in a preferred activity when the train reaches the end of the track. This article shows both versions of the On Track Program at the end of this article. Others who have used it use different icons/behavioral indicators to identify on track and off track, personalized to the presentation of the specific student. The train (copied and cut out, maybe laminated or mounted on cardboard) or some other marker, should be put at the beginning of the track and moved along to indicate progress through the task.

On task making progress.

The student is focused and making progress. Reference the icons in the green "on task" box and give credit while moving the train forward ("You're getting your work done and doing a great job listening to directions, so your train is moving toward the finish."). Staff judgment determines when to reinforce and the size of the reinforcement. For students who have done very little and have ignored teacher directions, it's wise to reinforce approximations to "on task" as a way to get things moving in the right direction, so the movement may follow quickly after the behavior, but it will be a small movement.

On task, but making only slow progress

The student is still on task, but working very slowly, well below what the student is capable of doing. Reinforce with slow and small movements of the train and credits should be provided at a slower rate ("You're getting a little bit done, so I can give you just some credit and I can move your train a little bit. Let's work hard so you can make

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the train move faster toward the end"). Be ready to move the train up if the pace picks up (don't wait). A visual feedback system is a continuous source of information for the student, so it has to be responsive to various things the student might try in an attempt to figure out what the teachers means with their urgings to work harder or faster or with more focus.

If you are using this program with credits, students might experience a credit shortage if they persisted in using a slow pace to finish the task. If you are using this program as a "first/then" program, the timer might indicate that the work period is over, and because the train did not make it to the end of the track, the preferred activity has to wait until the student tries again with another task, starting from the beginning ("That was your timer, and look, your train didn't make it to the end because you didn't finish your work. Your fun activity that you picked will have to wait because you picked not doing your work.>").

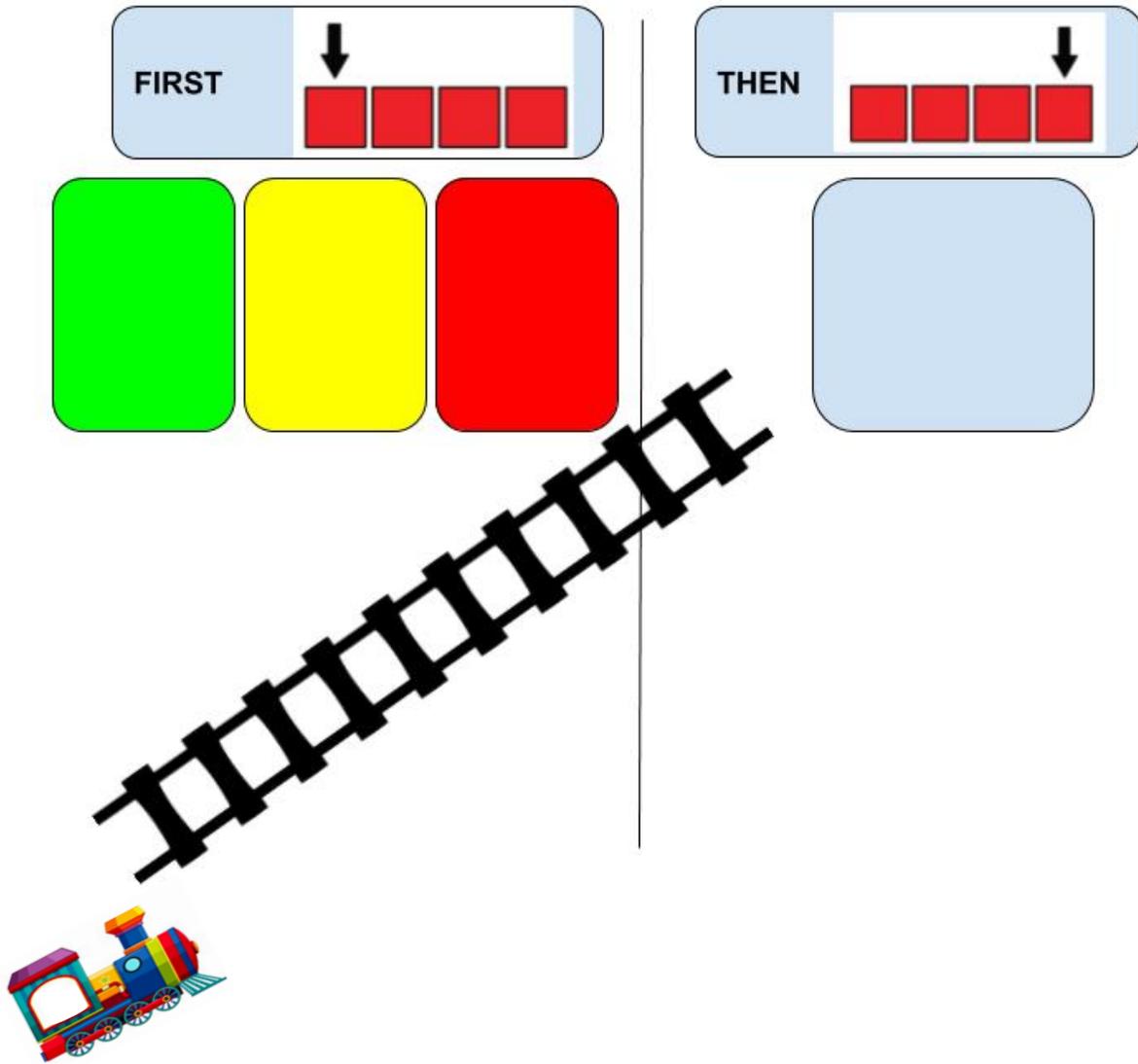
Off task

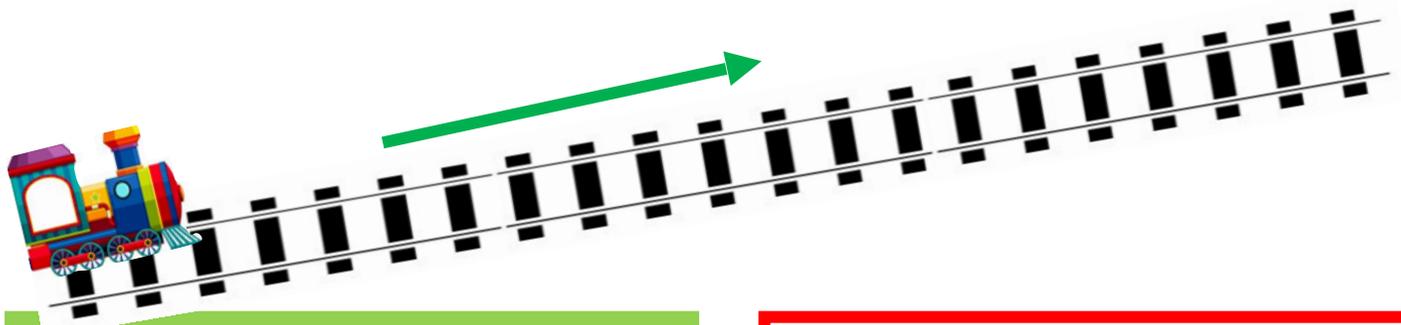
The student is engaging in significant off task behavior (not just staring off or working at a slow pace, but possibly out of the seat and walking around the classroom—see the icon examples). Move the train off the track ("I see you being silly instead of doing your work, so now your train is off the track. Let's settle down and get back to work so you can earn credits and reach the end.>"). The move off the track should place the train above or below the track where it will be started again, once the student gets back to work. It should not be moved backward. While the train is off the track, no credits are issued. As soon as the student gets back to work, the train can be put back on the track, and if the effort is sustained, it can be moved ahead and credits can be started again.

Off task with an episode

The student is engaging in significant off task behavior that is highly disruptive, or aggressive or unsafe (e.g., student runs out of the room, student disrupts a nearby group, student throws an object or rips up the paper). Move the train off the track and backwards (place the train above or below the track where it will be started again, once the student gets back to work). The significance of the move will depend on the significance of the behavior. Behavioral episodes, in this way, have a "cost" associated with them ("Running out of the room is not safe in school, so now we have to move your train back here and do this part of the track over again. Remember, stay on track, earn credits and get to the end.>"). This is the only condition that has a cost. The other three conditions are discriminated by variable levels of reinforcement.

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ON Track



getting work done



asking for help



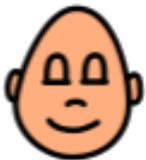
following routine



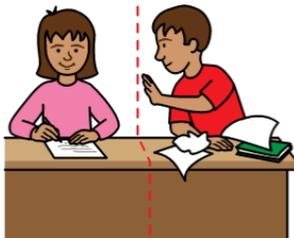
follow the teacher's direction



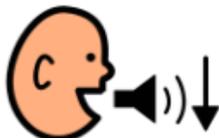
looking



safe body



staying in your area



voice volume



listening



sitting

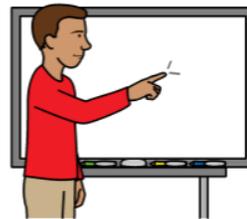
OFF Track



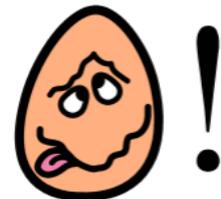
out of your seat



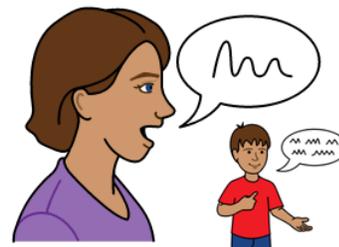
wandering around



touching the teacher's things



being silly



talking when the teacher is talking