

# Four Levels of Breaks



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# Scenarios



- **What would you do in the following situations?**
  - Student comes into class, goes to their desk, and lays their head down. As class starts, they continue to have their head down with eyes closed.
  - Student is fidgeting a lot during independent work time. You observe them biting on their pencil, wadding up their assignment, wringing their hands, and moving around in their seat.

# Scenarios (cont.)



- **What would you do in the following situations?**
  - Student comes into class and announces they had a bad night and don't intend to do any work today. They appear tired and angry.
  - The student is working at their desk for 20 minutes straight. When you walk by the desk, you notice they are still working on the first problem. You can tell they have erased their work several times, and you even notice that they have scribbled out some of their work.

# Break



- **What is a break (retrieved from google dictionary 8/6/2014):**
  - A pause in work or an activity
  - A break in the uniformity or continuity of something
  - A gap or opening
  - Time off from work or a job

# Purposes of a Break



- **Meet basic needs**
  - Lunch or snack; coffee/drink of water
  - Rest
- **Reduce tension or stress**
  - Decrease anxiety or sensory arousal
- **Recuperate, Recover, and Resilience**
  - Cognitive reserves
  - Sensory overload
  - Endurance

# Key Concepts



- A break occurs for a brief period of time
  - From seconds to 15 minutes
- After a break, the individual returns to work at a similar, or improved, level of endurance, motivation, etc...
- Very short breaks (seconds) occur more frequently, while longer breaks (minutes) occur only a few times a day
- When at all possible, longer breaks should be scheduled to avoid misuse of a break

# Things to Watch Out For...



- **Chaining of breaks**
  - Sensory + Bathroom + Reg Station + Behavior
- **Task or work avoidance being masked as a break/series of breaks**
- **Sensory needs being masked by requests for break**
- **Social emotional needs being masked by request for break**
- **Working to fatigue or meltdown**



# Four Levels of Breaks



# Level 1 Break



- **Characteristics:**
  - Very brief (seconds)
  - Takes place in the place that person is working
  - Immediate return to the task
- **What does it look like (example):**
  - While working on your computer, you stop typing for a moment, rub your eyes, and then start working again.
  - Examples from group

# Level 2 Break



- **Characteristics:**
  - Brief: seconds to 1-2 minutes
  - Takes place in the place that person is working or in area very close to where the person is working
  - Return to the task after break
- **What does it look like (example):**
  - While working at his desk, the student sets his pencil down, stands up, walks to the back of the room, stretches a few times, and then returns to his desk.
  - Examples from group

# Level 3 Break



- **Characteristics:**
  - Short: 2-5 minutes (at most)
  - Takes place in an area near to where work is taking place
  - Return to the task
- **What does it look like (example):**
  - While in the gym, the student requests to get a drink of water. The student walks to the water fountain, takes a drink, and returns to gym.
  - Examples from group

# Level 4 Break



- **Characteristics:**
  - Longer: 5-15 minutes
  - Can take place away from where work is taking place, but generally time going to and from area is included in break time
  - Return to work following break: may be the same task or a different task
- **What does it look like (example):**
  - Twice a day, the student has a regulation station break during which they follow their sensory plan for calming and integrating activities
  - Examples from group

# Review Scenarios from Beginning of Presentation



- **What are additional considerations that should be taken into account for each of the scenarios?**
- **What level of break seems appropriate for each?**
- **How would you decide?**

# Scenarios



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# Scenarios (cont.)



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# Questions and Discussion