

Minimal Desk

Undesirable Behavior: Off task/distracting behaviors → Cell phone use and passing notes

- Cell phone use (texting, video watching/games) is distracting for students- 1) can't focus on learning 2) aren't participating in choral responding 3) don't know answers when called on. Watching videos/games distracts nearby students and makes it difficult for them to learn as well.
- Ringers going off/vibrating, is a distraction that takes minds off of learning, especially during quiet reading times or tests.
- Passing notes distracts students 1) when they are writing/reading it 2) when they interrupt others to have the note passed.

Desirable Behavior: Minimal materials on desk = minimal distractions.

- The "Minimal Desk": A list of materials needed for that day's lesson on the board when students walk in (bare minimum: paper, pencil, book, clear desk, whatever is appropriate for that day). This also includes a reminder to turn off/mute phone.
- 1) Student walks in, sits down. 2) looks at minimal desk list on board/projector 3) get out specified materials and place them on top of desk 4) turn off/mute phone 5) put phone and unnecessary supplies into backpack 6) zip up backpack. Their desk looks like the minimal desk and they are seated and ready to learn.

Types of positive reinforcements - Reinforced1. Immediate R+ BSPS and a classroom leaf

There are 6 trees on the bulletin boards around the room bare of leaves, 1 for each class. Each class period is assigned a different tree that they are trying to fill with leaves.

- As students walk in and start to create their minimal desk, individuals will receive a BSPS
- At the start of class, if everyone's desk matches the minimal desk I praise class and attach 1 leaf to the tree.
- At the end of class, if no cell phone ringers/vibrations went off I praise class and attach 1 leaf to the tree.

2. Ongoing R+ Fill up a tree with leaves

Max leaves gained in 1 day is 2. When the class gets enough leaves to fill up a tree, we move that tree and start a new one. It takes 3 total trees to get the overall R+. The trees go in order for all classes, fill up the Pecan first, then the Live Oak, then the Texas Ash. The trees each have successively larger # of leaves to get: Pecan has 10 leaf slots (can be filled in 1wk if 2 leaves per day), then the Live Oak has 20, then Texas Ash has 30.

3. Overall R+ - Get Dirty Day! - Science 7th grade TEKS 112.19 - b.10.B Environment and Biodiversity.

Once the students fill up all 3 trees (30 days minimum time if perfect 2 leaves per day, probably will take 6-8 weeks in reality), we'll go outdoors on campus and plant saplings and seeds of the types of trees they filled up. Discuss these native tree species, biodiversity, how the diversity of these trees affects the environment, etc.

4. Easily administer all R+

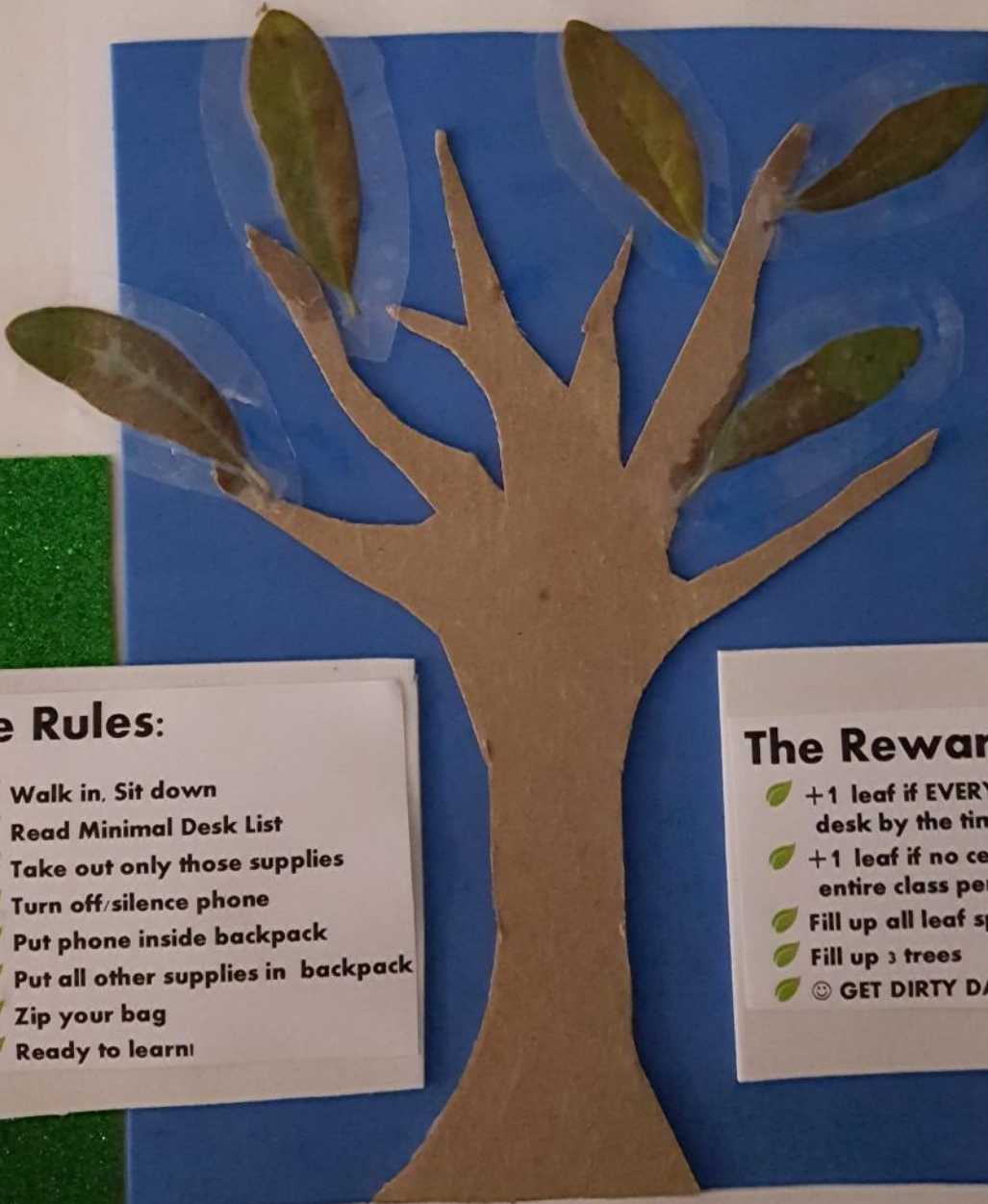
At the beginning and end of class I will glue a leaf for the appropriate behaviors listed above to immediately reinforce. When the tree is filled I'll take down that tree to hang up elsewhere in the room during class and praise the students for the achievement, but then put up their new empty tree to fill after class so it doesn't take time. The overall R+ we'll use it as an opportunity to learn biodiversity and the environment which is required learning for 7th grade science class.

Teach the Desired Behaviors: "Minimal desk" - Have an example desk at the front of the room facing the students. Write an example list of supplies on the board. Actually demonstrate the desired behavior - I will walk into class, sit at my desk, read the list, get out my supplies and put them on my example desk, turn off my phone, put my phone and everything else in my backpack, zip it shut. Perform this in perhaps an exaggerated and silly way, dress like a "student", use a giant 1980s cell phone, something to make it memorable.

Teach the Plan: Hang all the empty trees in the room before students come in, have the minimal desk set up in the front of the room, so when kids come in there are trees everywhere which is exciting and interesting. Then simply show students their leaves, the expectations (with the demonstration of the desired behavior above), how I will track the leaves, and explain their final reward of getting to go out to grounds of campus and plant the living trees that are represented by their paper trees. Have everyone actually perform minimal desk (go out of the room and come back in and go through all the steps) and actually earn 1 leaf on day one (2 leaves if their phones really are silent and don't go off the whole time).

Provide options: 1) If there are a few "rebel" students that I think the "group leaf" method might not work, use individual leaf method with a leaf per student following the minimal desk. Increase leaf empty slots to fill, but decrease total # of trees to fill. 2) If a student can't read a list on the board, use the "example" desk up front with required materials on it each day as well as the list on the board so there is a visual cue as well as a written list. 3) If the weather is too bad to plant trees, instead plant tree seeds in pots in the classroom and care for them to grow into saplings to plant when the weather gets better.

MINIMAL DESK



The Rules:

- Walk in, Sit down
- Read Minimal Desk List
- Take out only those supplies
- Turn off/silence phone
- Put phone inside backpack
- Put all other supplies in backpack
- Zip your bag
- Ready to learn!

The Reward:

- +1 leaf if EVERYONE has mini-desk by the time the bell rings
- +1 leaf if no cell phone noise for entire class period
- Fill up all leaf spots on each tree
- Fill up 3 trees
- ☺ GET DIRTY DAY! ☺

Get Dirty Day! We will go outside to plant saplings and seeds from the Pecan, Live Oak, and Texas Ash trees you filled!