

Self-Regulation Executive Function Definitions with Examples of Teacher Prompts

George McCloskey, Ph.D., Bob R. Van Divner, M.S. & Lisa Perkins, M.S.

Use this list to prepare for observing and noting Teacher
Prompts provided during classroom instruction.

Self-Regulation Executive Function	Examples of Teacher Prompts: (P=Perceiving F=Feeling T=Thinking A=Action)
<p>Perceive Cues the use of sensory and perception processes to take information in from the external environment or “inner awareness” to tune into perceptions, emotions, thoughts, or actions as they are occurring</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: “Everyone look at the board.” P: “What do you see when you look in the box?” P: “Listen to this.” P: “You’ll need to listen carefully to this next part.” P: “Feel how rough that edge is?” P: “Feel how heavy this is.” F: “How are you feeling right now?” T: “What are you thinking about right now?” A: “Try to notice how you bend your legs when you do that.”</p> <p>Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: “Why aren’t you looking up here now?” P: “Why do I always have to tell you to listen?” P: “You have hands don’t you?” (i.e., use them and touch it) P: “You’re not watching what you’re doing are you?” F: “You don’t even know what you’re feeling, do you?” T: “Do you have any idea what you are thinking about now?” A: “Watch what you’re doing.”</p>
<p>Initiate Cues the initial engagement of perceiving, feeling, thinking, or acting</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: “Everyone should be looking at the board now.” F: “Now would be a good time to express any feelings you have about it.” T: “Start thinking about it now.” A: “Start walking now.” A: “Read the first question now.”</p> <p>Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: “Why aren’t you listening yet?” F: “Don’t you feel anything when you see something like that?” T: “Don’t wait to get started thinking about it.” A: “Why haven’t you started yet?” A: “What will it take to get you moving?”</p>

Self-Regulation EF	Examples of Teacher Prompts:
<p>Modulate cues the regulation of the amount and intensity of mental energy invested in perceiving, feeling, thinking, and acting.</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: "If you listen hard, you might hear her whispering in the background." F: "Let's all try to keep our cool even if they are yelling at us." T: "This is the kind of problem that requires a lot of thinking power to complete." A: "This is going to take your best effort to complete." A: "You'll need to bring your "A" game if you expect to do well." A: "Be sure to put enough time and energy into your work." Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: "What will it take to make you listen the way you need to?" T: "You don't have the brain power to get this one." A: "Why can't you put more effort into your practicing?"</p>
<p>Gauge cues identification of the demands of a task and cues the activation of the perceptions, emotions, thoughts, or actions needed to effectively engage the task or situation</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: "What diagrams do you think you'll need to look at to do this problem?" F: "What kind of mood would you want to be in to do well with something like this?" T: "What kind of thinking will this situation require?" A: "Consider what it's going to take to get this job done as quickly as possible." Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: "Can't you figure out what you should be looking at to get this done?" F: "That's certainly not the type of attitude to have if you hope to succeed." T: "Do I have to explain everything to you ahead of time?" A: "You have no idea about what you need to do, do you?"</p>
<p>Focus/Select cues the direction of attention to the most relevant specifics of a given environment, situation, or content while downgrading or ignoring the less relevant elements.</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: "Look at the top of the left-hand column on page 23." F: "Pay attention to the feelings you experience as you listen to this poem." T: "Try to focus on your thoughts on Sarah's problem in the story." A: "Pay attention to how you are holding your pencil when you do that." Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: "Don't look away from the board yet." F: "Didn't you pay attention to her first reaction?" T: "You're not concentrating hard enough to solve this problem." A: "You're going to trip and drop that if you don't watch out for the first step."</p>

Self-Regulation EF	Examples of Teacher Prompts:
<p>Sustain cues sustained engagement of the processes involved in perceiving, feeling, thinking, or acting</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: "Everyone keep looking at the chart until I tell you to stop." F: "Try to keep feeling that way about it." T: "You might need to think longer about this if you want to come up with a good answer." A: "You'll need to keep writing for at least another minute." Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: "Don't just give it a quick glance." F: "It would go a lot faster if you weren't so moody." T: "You always give up when the problems get hard." A: "I don't think you have the stamina it takes to do this."</p>
<p>Stop/Interrupt cues the sudden, immediate discontinuation of perceiving, feeling, thinking, or acting</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: "Please stop listening to that." F: "It would be helpful to all of us if you could stop feeling that way about it." T: "Please stop thinking about that." A: "Please stop doing that." Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: "Didn't I tell you to stop watching that?" F: "Stop obsessing about how you feel." T: "Can't you stop thinking about that?" A: "It's going to be a real problem if you don't stop that right now."</p>
<p>Inhibit cues resistance to, or suppression of, urges to perceive, feel, think, or act on first impulse</p>	<p>Positive and specific: [NOTE: Positive cues direct capacities to an alternate source rather than drawing attention to the perception, emotion, thought, or action that should be inhibited.] P: "Listen to what Jane is saying." (Instead of the conversation that is taking place outside the open window). F: "Laugh and be happy." (While inhibiting feelings of sadness). T: "Try to focus on thoughts that will produce a positive solution." (Instead of thoughts that only lead to complaining about the problem.) A: "Let's do this." (Instead of doing what will cause problems.) Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: [NOTE: Negative cues draw attention to what should be inhibited, often making it that much more difficult to resist.] P: "Don't look over there." F: "Don't even go there." (Referring to a specific emotional state) T: "Don't even think about it." A: "Don't you dare do that."</p>

Self-Regulation EF	Examples of Teacher Prompts:
<p>Flexible/Shift cues a change of focus or alteration of perceptions, emotions, thoughts or actions in reaction to what is occurring in the internal or external environments.</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: "This arrangement might take a little getting used to, but I think you will find it to be just as enjoyable as what you are used to listening to." F: "I know how you feel about these events, but you might be surprised by how much fun they can be." T: "Try to think about it from a different perspective." A: "You'll need to try doing things differently if you want to solve this one." Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: "So what if it sounds different? Get over it." F: "Will you ever learn to adjust to how other people feel?" T: "Don't be so rigid with your thinking!" A: "Would it kill you to be a little more accepting of other ways to get things done?"</p>
<p>Hold cues activation of the cognitive processes required to maintain information in working memory and continues cueing these processes until the information is manipulated, stored, or acted on as desired.</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: "Hold on to what he just said." F: "Hang on to that feeling for a while." T: "Hold that thought while we continue." A: "Keep that routine in mind while we try the next one." Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: "Don't lose track of the conversation." F: "Don't let that feeling get away from you." T: "Don't lose that thought." A: "Did I mention that we'll need to do that again in a minute?"</p>
<p>Manipulate cues the use of working memory and other cognitive processes for the manipulation of perceptions, feelings, thoughts or actions as they are being held in mind or being accessed in the environment.</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: "Visualize what it would look like if turned upside down." F: "Imagine how you would have felt if she had cried when you said that." T: "Now take what you just said and try to think about what might happen next." A: "Now walk through the steps in your mind to see if you can spot anything that might not have gotten done." Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: "Can't you see how that would look if you turned it upside down." F: "Did you even bother to consider how you would have felt if that had been you instead of him." T: "You should have taken the time to think that one through in your mind before answering." A: "You didn't review the steps in your mind before doing this did you?"</p>

Self-Regulation EF	Examples of Teacher Prompts:
<p>Foresee/Plan (Short-term) cues the anticipation of conditions or events in the very near future, such as the consequences of one’s own actions, or cues the engagement of the capacities required to identify a series of perception, feelings, thoughts, and/or actions, and the likely or desired outcome that would result from carrying them out in the very near future.</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: “Let’s make a plan for where to search for the keys so we are sure not to miss anywhere or look in the same places many times.” F: “How will you feel if you’re not chosen first?” T: “Can you come up with a plan for solving number 18?” A: “If you keep erasing in that same spot, what do you think will happen to the paper?”</p> <p>Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: “How do you expect to find the keys without a plan?” F: “It’s probably hard for you to imagine how he will feel if he loses this game.” T: “It’s going to take a lot more thinking than you’ve been doing to come up with a plan to finish this problem.”</p>
<p>Organize cues the use of routines for sorting, sequencing, or otherwise arranging perceptions, feelings, thoughts, and/or actions, to enhance or improve the efficiency of experiencing, learning, or performing</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: “Organize these by color.” F: “It would be good if you could sort out your feelings on this issue.” T: “You might want to outline your thoughts on the subject before you start writing.” A: “Let’s establish the order in which you need to do things to get this task done.”</p> <p>Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: “This looks like a disaster.” F: “Get your act together before you spout off like that.” T: “Where’s the organization here?” A: “I can’t even find my way through this mess.”</p>
<p>Generate/Associate cues the realization that associations need to be made, or that fluid problem-solving efforts are required and cues the activation of the resources needed to carry out problem-solving routines.</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: “Have you heard anything like that before?” F: “You might want to take some time to figure out how you feel about this.” T: “This problem will require some novel thinking if you are going to find a solution.” A: “Is this similar to any other experiment we’ve done.”</p> <p>Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: “Can’t you see the connection here?” F: “Can’t you figure out a way to respond without hurting everyone’s feelings?” T: “Did it occur to you that some thinking might be needed here?” T: “What were you thinking?” A: “Don’t just stand there’ do something.” A: “Do I have to show you how to do everything?”</p>

Self-Regulation EF	Examples of Teacher Prompts:
<p>Balance cues the regulation of the trade-off between opposing processes or states (e.g., pattern vs detail; speed vs accuracy; humor vs seriousness) to enhance or improve experiencing, learning, or performing.</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: "Be sure to look closely enough to see all the details." F: "You said you liked it, but you have only expressed negative feelings so far." T: "You are only thinking about a few details and not considering the bigger picture." A: "Work as quickly as you can, but be careful not to make any mistakes." Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: "You're obsessing again." [Meaning attending to small details too much] F: "Are you trying to make a point here or just venting?" T: "You need to come up with a lot more than this?" A: "If you can't do a better job than this, you'll never pass." [Meaning more details are needed.]</p>
<p>Store cues the movement of information about perceptions, feelings, thoughts and actions from the mental processing environment of the present moment into "storage" for possible retrieval at a later time.</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: "Remember what you just heard." F: "That's a feeling you'll want to remember for a long time." T: "If you remember this rule, you will never have trouble solving this type of problem." A: "Watch carefully every time I do it this week, because you will need to do it on your own next week." Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: "Some of the things you are going to hear today are very important to remember." F: "I wouldn't want to forget the problems that caused." T: "Everything in the book is important, so study all of it." A: "Some of the things we are going to do are really important to remember."</p>
<p>Retrieve cues the activation of cognitive processes responsible for finding and retrieving previously stored information about perceptions, feelings, thoughts and actions. The more specific the demands or constraints placed on the retrieval task, the greater the requirements for precision of retrieval cues.</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: "Who can recall what we saw at the museum entrance?" F: "How did you feel last week when he first mentioned it?" T: "To answer the question correctly, you will probably need to recall all that we learned about photosynthesis." A: "Do you remember how he built that?" Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: "Don't forget that sound." F: "I don't suppose you have any recollection of what it felt like." T: "The test will cover everything in the book." A: "Can't you remember how to do that?"</p>

Self-Regulation EF	Examples of Teacher Prompts:
<p>Pace cues the awareness of, and the regulation of, the rate at which perception, emotion, cognition, and action are experienced or performed.</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: "You will only have a short time to view the entire page." F: "There won't be much time to decide how you feel about it." T: "Think through it carefully; rushing might cause you to forget something." A: "Try to keep an even pace while you are working." Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: "I don't think you're going to be able to see everything if you don't hurry up." F: "It's hard to believe you are sincere when you react that quickly." T: "You have to get better at thinking on your feet" A: "Where's the fire?"</p>
<p>Time cues the monitoring of the passage of time (e.g., cueing the engagement of the mental functions that enable a person to have an internal sense of how long they have been working) or cues the use of time estimation routines (e.g., cueing the engagement of mental functions that enable a person to have an internal sense of how long something will take to complete, or how much time is still left in a specific period of time).</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: "How long have you been listening to that?" F: "How long have you felt that way?" T: "Spend about five minutes thinking about it." A: "How long will it take you to do this?" A: "I'll let you know when there is five minutes left." Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: "I can't believe you are still watching that." F: "I don't think you've really been feeling that way for hours." T: "If you'd have thought about it when you were supposed to, you wouldn't have gotten a zero." A: "Don't you know you can't apply the second coat that soon after the first?"</p>
<p>Execute cues the orchestrating of the proper syntax of a series of perceptions, feelings, thoughts, and/or actions, especially in cases where automated routines are being accessed or are initially being developed</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: "Use the left to right scanning approach we learned last week." F: "Now would be a good time to use the relaxation routine to ease your tension." T: "Set it up like a standard logic problem." T: "Let me show you how to solve that in 3 steps instead of 6." A: "Use the slip knot that you know." Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: "You're all over the place with that." [Meaning the approach to taking in information isn't following a routine that was just taught.] F: "Can't you smile when you say that?" T: "You're clueless about how to think about this aren't you?" A: "Don't you know how to do that right?"</p>

Self-Regulation EF	Examples of Teacher Prompts:
<p>Monitor cues the activation of appropriate routines for checking the accuracy of perceptions, emotions, thoughts, or actions</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: "Look at each item carefully. Some require addition and some require subtraction." F: "Before you get upset about it, you might want to make sure that's really how he felt about it." T: "I think you should check your facts before you go much further." A: "Watch your steering carefully or we'll end up far off course." Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: "If you don't look closely, you're likely to make mistakes." F: "Keep a close watch on your heart." T: "I'd think twice about that if I were you." A: "Don't lose track of where we are."</p>
<p>Correct cues the use of appropriate routines for correcting errors of perception, emotion, thought, or action based on feedback from internal or external sources</p>	<p>Positive and specific: P: "If you hear a mispronunciation as you listen again, immediately rewind the tape and re-record your response." F: "You know how hurtful that was; go apologize right now." T: "If you find a flaw in your thinking, correct it before moving on." A: "Take that broken one out and put a new one in." Negative, vague and/or poorly timed: P: "Something doesn't look right here." F: "She's upset, so what should you say?" T: "Someone's not thinking very carefully." A: "I see you have a lot to fix up in here."</p>

Tool for Assessing the Instructional Environment for the Presence of Self-Regulation Executive Function Prompts

George McCloskey, Ph.D., Bob R. Van Divner, M.S. & Lisa Perkins, M.S.

Self-Regulation EF	Notes on Observed Prompts	Tallies:
Perceive cues the use of perception processes or “inner awareness”		
Initiate cues the initial engagement of perceiving, feeling, thinking, or acting		
Modulate cues the regulation of the amount and intensity of energy used		
Gauge cues identification of the demands of a task		
Focus/Select cues the direction of attention to the most relevant elements		
Sustain cues sustained engagement of processes		
Stop/Interrupt cues sudden, immediate discontinuation		
Inhibit cues resistance to, or suppression of, first impulses		
Flexible/Shift cues changes based on new circumstances		
Hold cues the holding of information		
Manipulate cues working with information that is being held in mind		

Self-Regulation EF	Notes on Observed Prompts	Tallies:
Foresee/Plan (Short-term) cues anticipation of the future and planning		
Organize cues the use of routines for sorting, sequencing, and arranging		
Generate/Associate cues the making of connections or generation of solutions		
Balance cues the regulation of the trade-off between opposing processes or states		
Store cues the movement of information into “storage” for possible retrieval later		
Retrieve cues the retrieval of stored information		
Pace cues the awareness of, and the regulation of, the rate of performance		
Time cues the monitoring of, or estimation of, the passage of time		
Execute cues performance of the proper syntax of routines		
Monitor cues the activation of appropriate routines for accuracy checking		
Correct cues the use of appropriate routines for correcting errors		