

Intermediate – Stay On Task And Avoid Distractions

Aim: To teach students to deal with potential distractions so that they stay on task.

Lead-in: Write the following on the board:

- *smart phone*
- *computer*
- *TV*
- *family members/ friends*

Encourage students to think back to the previous school week and decide if any of the distractions written on the board kept them from completing a task (do their homework, study, etc.). Get them to add other distractions they can think of. Ask them to be very honest. Go through the different distractions and elicit from students in what ways they are distracting.

Get students to think about physical and mental aspects that prevent them from concentrating (e.g., *being hungry, tired, bored, not having all the information they need*, etc.) and lead an open discussion about the way these distractions might affect the quality of their work and elicit some ideas from the class.

Have students work in pairs and think of three easy ways they could prevent being distracted by the things mentioned so far (e.g., *Turn off electrical devices, have a small snack when you get home, set a time later to do the fun things*).

Choose A Scenario: Ask students to work in pairs and choose one of the three scenarios (A–C). Suggest students begin by identifying the problem areas that are clear from reading the scenarios. What are the distractions? What problems do they cause? Think of some advice for the person so that they don't get distracted and they manage to do what they want to do.

Encourage students to devise a list of solutions for the problem that they could present to the person in their scenario. Recommend that students refer to the Reflection Point when completing the task.

Reflection Point: Remind students that there are many distractions all around that can make it difficult for them to concentrate and complete the

task in hand, but finding ways to keep them away is an important skill that can help them in the future.

Class discussion: Have sets of pairs who worked on the same scenario compare their problems. Ask: *Did you pick out the same distraction problems? Did you have the same solutions? Which solutions were best?*

Discuss with students whether the scenarios they approached were ever similar to situations they experience in their daily lives. Ask students the following questions:

- *In your scenario, was it quite easy to avoid the distractions?*
- *Do you think the person in each scenario knew they were being distracted? If so, why didn't they think of a solution alone?*
- *Is it always possible to avoid distractions?*

Encourage them to share some other situations out of school where being distracted causes them problems (e.g., *miss things your friends say, take the wrong bus, buy the wrong thing*, etc.).

Work alone: Ask students to work alone to choose a second scenario (A–C) and follow the same steps as in section 2. Once they've finished, invite volunteers to present the problems and solutions they've put together.

Extension: Encourage students to think of the consequences that distractions can have. Present the following scenarios and elicit what might happen:

- *A bus driver talking on his mobile phone at the wheel.*
- *A policeman listening to music while he is patrolling the streets.*
- *A construction worker playing games on his mobile phone App while working on a site.*

If students have time, they could find funny stories involving distractions and read them out in class. Get students to think of three things they can do in the next week which will help them stay on task better.