

# Learning centers in elementary education

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A child needs to take charge of its learning in order to become an independent learner. Teaching to work independently is to teach a habit and not a subject matter. I will have to choose a suitable pedagogical approach that will help cultivate independent learning in an elementary student. In learning centers, children work with their peers and, hence, need the skills of working independently as a group too. I see academic choice within a structured learning environment, where students are aware of behavioral expectations, will help to a large extent. In addition to shaping the learner, my role as a facilitator also is important. Making my students work independently is a process where I will try to cultivate a culture with the help of the strategies I propose below.

Firstly, I will not follow the traditional teacher's practice of instinctively helping students most of the time, a habit which will most likely develop a tendency to depend too much on the teacher. Unless I refrain from it on a daily basis, the students will get the message that I will interfere whenever there is a problem. For instance, I will give the students academic choice that has been suggested in education research as a way to cultivate motivated learners (Gottfried, 1985). For instance, I will encourage them to find answers to questions that they raise. This will equip the students with tools to solve any difficulty that might arise while they are working at the learning centers.

Choice, however, has to be balanced with control to some extent (Boud, 1988). Control, in my opinion, is not direct but exercised indirectly to facilitate independence. To illustrate, reorganising classroom space is one way to reduce dependency on teacher. If students know where to look for supplies, for instance, they will not have to interrupt the teacher. This is a <https://assignbuster.com/learning-centers-in-elementary-education/>

strategy to reduce potential problems that usually make students seek teacher's help.

Structured learning also helps as it has features of control and choice. I will set up well-structured learning activities as learning centers tasks and ask them to make choices within that framework. I consider such frameworks as providing scope for independent work within boundaries that the need for teacher's support becomes least likely. This includes providing all the materials needed on the learning activity and clear rules and expectations of behavior (Reeve & Jang, 2006). One way to teach the behavioral expectations is to do role-plays. I will also check understanding by asking questions to them while setting up the learning activity.

Overall, I will try to inculcate independent learning as a habit by cultivating it as a culture in my classroom and by having control to a certain extent over the behavior, activities and classroom space.

#### References

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