The CATALYST Approach™

to

Supporting Success from a Distance

Developed by
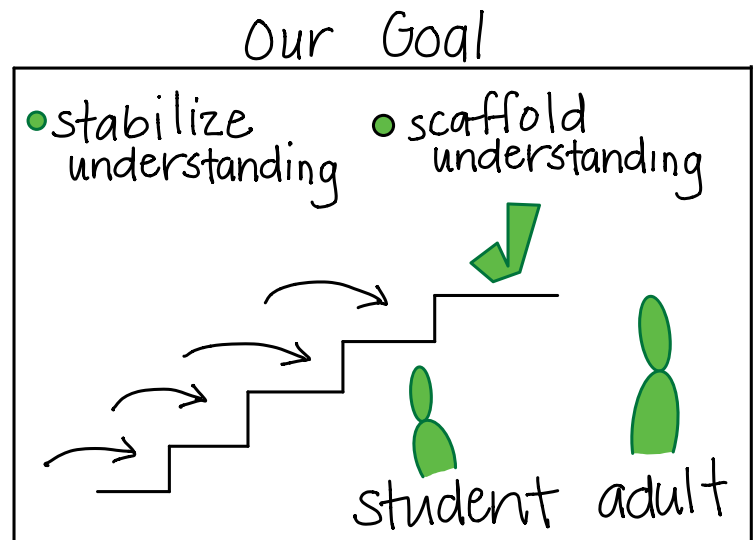Nancy Burns & Jacki Brickman

ISBN

V1

Course Objective

In this class, you will learn strategies that enhance your ability to support individual students academically via distance learning. Although there are many reasons why an adult might meet with a student one-on-one, this course looks through the lens of helping a student who has already learned a concept and needs additional support to understand or complete an assignment. As you implement these skills, you will discover that the skills have many other applications in the world of learning and communication, both online and in person.

Our Goal

When meeting one-on-one with a student, whether it's via Zoom, Google Meet, or other technology, the first goal is to stabilize the knowledge the student is starting with. What do they already know about their task? Next, the adult, working hand-in-hand with the student, efficiently scaffolds them up to the new understanding that meets the lesson's objective.

Sometimes the student comes with an understanding and simply needs to brainstorm ideas. At Other times, the student comes with a small amount of understanding, or maybe, none at all, and the adult has to reteach and build knowledge in a step-by-step fashion.

Our Goal
- stabilize understanding
- scaffold understanding

student   adult

Pause video and Reflect

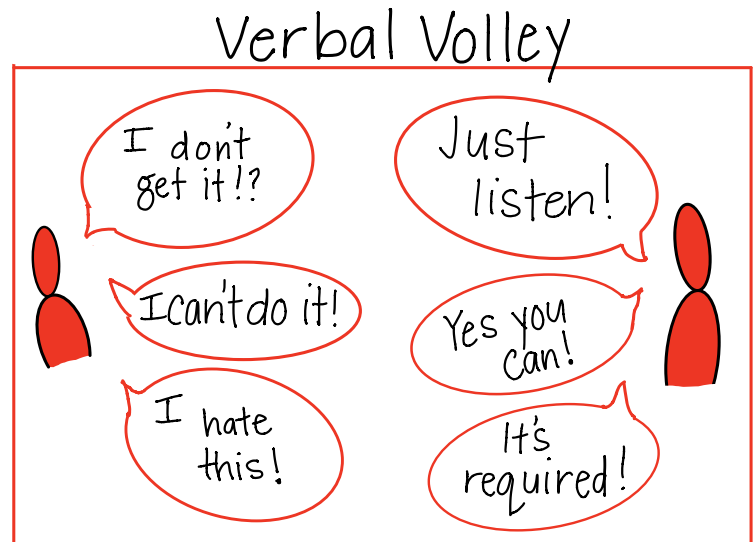Students who need additional academic support

What important concepts are they struggling to understand?

Verbal Volley: The Frustration Scenario

When helping students, there are times that the adult inadvertently communicates in a way that hinders understanding. The interaction causes frustration and a verbal back-and-forth ensues, possibly escalating to a point where the student gives up. These frustrations can grow even greater and even more pronounced when teaching via distance learning.

It might sound something like this:

> The students says, "I don't get it."
> The teacher replies, "Just listen." And the teacher goes on to explain more and more.
> The student is frustrated, and says, "I can't do it."
> The teachers says, "Uhm! Yes, you can!" as the teacher tries to explain it in a different way.
> The child voices even more irritation, "I hate this!"
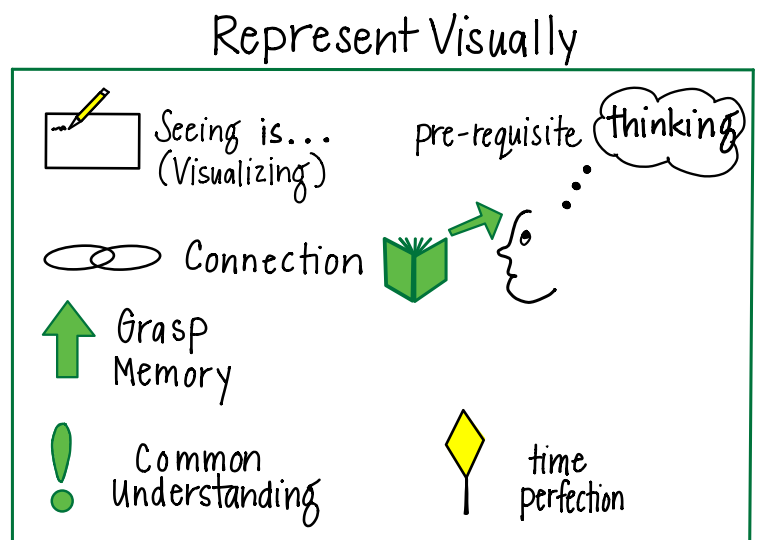> The teacher, equally annoyed, comes back and says, "Well, it's required!"

This exchange can go on and on, which makes the stress of being away from the comforts of school even more difficult for both the teacher and the student. This frustration scenario is called, the Verbal Volley. To avoid the Verbal Volley, the adult can prepare in two ways: first, boost their ability to communicate with a visual representation and second, plan their steps to cyber success.

Represent Visually

There is an abundance of research that highlights the importance of seeing something, or visualizing a picture in one's mind, as crucial to learning. In fact, to encourage adults to be motivated to create visuals for their students, visualizing could be thought of as a "pre-requisite" for thinking.

When a concept is illustrated with a visual, a student is more likely to:

- Make a connection between what they read or hear and reference back to what they already know, which increases understanding.
- Grasp concepts faster.
- Remember what was learned

Looking at a common visual also ensures mutual understanding during the learning process between the adult and the student.

A legitimate concern about creating visuals for individual lessons is they take a long time to prepare. If the adult knows exactly what visual will help scaffold the learning for the student ahead of the session, it does take time to find it or create it. However, it will be time well spent, as the student is likely to grasp the concept faster. For example, if the student is learning the basics of building a paragraph using the hamburger model, it behooves the adult to have that visual ready to refer to while helping the student with their writing. As the adult gets into the routine of knowing which concepts are associated with specific visuals, it will take less and less time to prepare.

More commonly, the visuals used in a one-on-one support session are created live during the interaction between the adult and student, as it helps the brain decipher and make sense of what the drawing represents. In this case, the challenge is for the adult to remember that their drawings do not need to be perfect, they just need to be present. If perfectionism stands in the way of the adult being willing to create understanding for the student, everyone loses out. For example, imagine the adult drawing a square and saying "this is a swimming pool." The student now believes the square represents a swimming pool. If the adult draws a similar square and refers to that square as a rug, the student understands the new square differently. Again, drawing pictures as the student watches, requires a growth mindset and risk-taking on the part of most adults. Perfectionism must be set aside. Instead, take a deep breath, slow down, and find comfort in the fact that most ideas can be communicated visually with the simple shapes of a circle, a rectangle, a triangle, and a line. What is the easiest way to demarcate intricacies within a concept? Colors! Use colors (markers, paper, highlighter) to organize and make more meaning out of concepts, vocabulary, and lists.

There are two ways to use visuals to meet the stated goals of stabilizing and scaffolding understanding. To stabilize understanding, the adult invites the student to verbalize what they already know. While the student is speaking, the adult simultaneously creates a visual representation. This gives the learner and the adult a starting point. For example, consider a scenario in which a student is stuck and needs help writing a sonnet.

> The student says, "I need help with my Shakespearean sonnet." The adult responds by asking what the student remembers about sonnets. The student shares that they know it is a poem with 14 lines. The adult follows up by drawing 14 lines. Then the adult continues by saying, "I know some poems rhyme. Does a sonnet rhyme?" The student shares their knowledge that sonnets are in stanzas of 4 lines and they rhyme every other line within the stanza. The adult adds the AB pattern for the first stanza, and then shows a CD pattern for the next stanza, followed by the EF pattern in the final stanza. The goal is to stabilize the starting point together on a visual piece of paper, which provides an anchor for both the adult and the student moving forward.

When the purpose is to scaffold understanding, the adult creates a visual that will communicate new information in a step-by step-manner. Let's pick up on the sonnet example.

> The student shares that they believe they have remembered everything they know about a sonnet. The adult then asks if there is a rhyming pattern for the last two lines and the student cannot remember. The adult offers that the last two lines rhyme with each other and adds GG to the diagram. Next, the adult reminds the student that another important aspect of sonnets is that every line has ten syllables. The adult then adds the number ten to ensure the student will remember as they move on to the more challenging piece of the job, which is the actual writing of a sonnet.

Find a Balance

There are two different methods of transforming verbal information into visual information. One method is to stimulate the brain's ability to analyze by using words, lists, and numbers. The other is to activate the brain's ability to be creative by using pictures, diagrams, and colors.

The goal is to combine both methods, because words, lists, and numbers can communicate details effectively, while pictures, diagrams and colors help students to see the big picture and understand patterns of content in a different way. The brain can also process pictures more quickly. When the adults balance their approach to creating visuals, learning is accelerated.

There are cautions in both styles. When it comes to the analytical approach, the caution is to be brief with words. If an adult's style is to use a lot of words, there can be an over-abundance of details. The highest risk of going overboard with words is when the adult is creating the visual by typing on a keyboard. If the adult is writing the words by hand, the by-product is they will be more brief.

Another caution when adding pictures and icons to stimulate the creative brain is that being strategic makes the visual powerful. For example, since "a picture is worth a thousand words," sometimes the adult might only use pictures for key concepts and ideas so that the meaning is preserved, and clutter is prevented.

Rest assured! Your efforts will be worth it. You'll find that when you create a visual that balances both the analytical and creative parts of the brain, the student remains calm, stays engaged in understanding, and long-term memory increases.
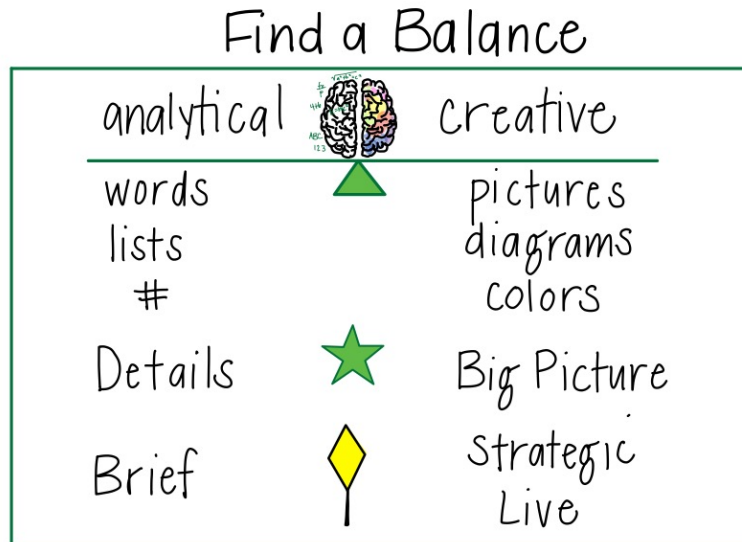
Getting Visually Prepared

Having supplies ready is one of the ways adults can increase the likelihood they will develop a practice of teaching students with visual supports. This will include choosing and setting up your space for online teaching as well as gathering and organizing supplies.

Your Space

There are lots of factors that impact how or why a teacher selects the space to do their online instruction. For some, there is already an ideal space available, yet for many, they must make do with adapting an available space in the best way possible. The ideas in this section are for consideration. In some cases, teachers will be able to use the suggestion as presented, in other cases the idea can be a springboard of how to adapt a space based on a teachers reality.

Charging Stations: When it comes to going visual with technology having a variety of charging station at the ready will ensure that teachers will have their devices working. Take a look around the space and allocate (even dedicate) a charging station for each kind of device that you use. These devices might include a desktop computer, a laptop computer, a table, cell phone, document camera, video camera and more.

Lighting: Try a variety of instruction locations based on the back lighting. This may vary based on the time of day, the overhead lighting and lamps being off or on, and the location of the windows. You may have to decide, what control, if any you have over the lighting in your space.

Ergonomics: Depending on how long you will need to be in front of a screen leading synchronous meetings or recording asynchronous meetings, you may want to be able to shift to a variety of chairs or computer heights. Computer heights can be adjusted by propping them up on books or boxes.

Visual Options: In addition to the ability to go visual via technology, you may want the option to write on a white board or chart hanging on the wall. You may replace an existing picture with a whiteboard during instruction or take down a picture to make room for a place to hang a chart.
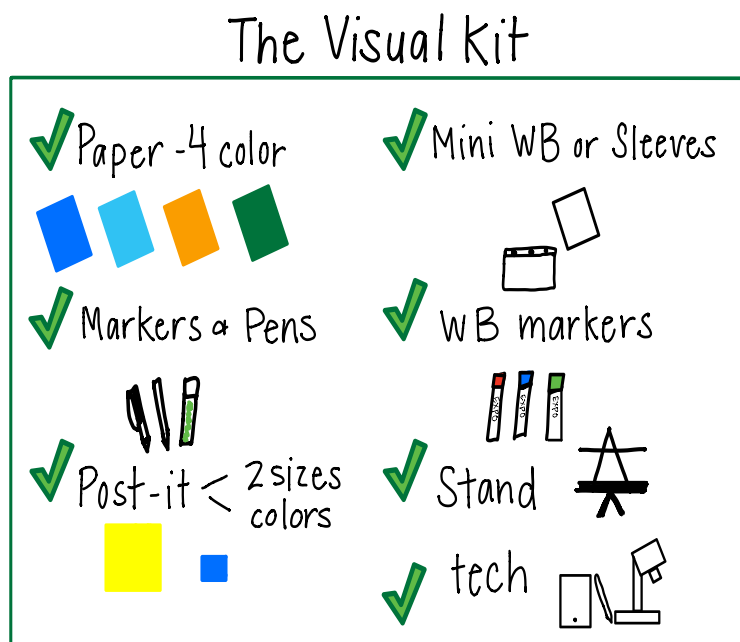
Balancing Form and Function: Most teachers are not used to inviting our students into our homes and home offices. In order to decrease background distractions, it helps to have fast ways to tidy up, yet also keep us organized. A decorative container can hold extra chargers and double as a way to adjust computer height, a lower shelf can be used to hold clutter that you want to move out of the camera view, shelves in camera view can stay clutter free and appealing or a space for needed supplies.

The Visual Kit

By creating a "Visual Kit" with basic materials and keeping it next to the computer or device used to connect virtually, adults are more likely to implement key strategies.

The visual kit will usually include 3-7 items. Your school may be able to provide the materials for you. While there are tech devices that are useful, the basics are just as important.

Multicolored paper: We recommend four different colors – you can choose! Use different colors for each topic or concept discussed with the student. This helps the adult and the student organize thoughts so that when the adult refers back to previous content, it's easier for the student's brain to separate and track ideas. The following example will help you visualize how the paper could be used:

The Visual Kit

- ✔ Paper - 4 color
- ✔ Mini WB or Sleeves
- ✔ Markers & Pens
- ✔ WB markers
- ✔ Post-it < 2 sizes colors
- ✔ Stand
- ✔ tech

The student is struggling with multiplying fractions. The adult is gathering information about what the student knows, and they understand that the student knows what a denominator is – it's the number on the bottom. They also understand that the student knows the numerator is the number on the top. The teacher can represent that visually by selecting a green piece of paper and drawing a fraction with the words, "numerator" and "denominator." That stabilizes the key vocabulary and its meaning.

Next, the teacher wants to move on to actually helping the student solve the problem. Once the focus of the support switches to problem-solving, rather than using the same piece of green paper used for vocabulary, it helps for the adult to

use a different colored piece of paper to represent moving on to the problem-solving process. So, the adult grabs a different colored piece of paper – let's say this piece is blue. On the blue paper, the adult creates a visual showing, "one-half times three-fourths".

So, now we have the green piece of paper with the vocabulary and the blue piece of paper with the example. Midway through explaining and supporting the student with the specific problem on the blue paper, the student says, "I don't understand which is the denominator and which is the numerator." Immediately the teacher puts down the blue piece of paper and refers back to the green one. This way, via distance learning, the student realizes that the teacher is going back to a review concept. As the session goes on, the multi-paper method also allows the teacher to track where certain bits of information are stored.

In addition, if the student starts a new problem, rather than creating it on the same blue piece of paper, the teacher can switch colors again. This switch indicates one problem is complete and now we've gone on to another problem. Colored paper can be helpful in sorting out all kinds of concepts and allowing the teacher and student to efficiently track information.

Multicolored markets and pens: Sharpies are great for emphasis. Pencils are nice because they're erasable, but they are not as easy to see when the support is happening virtually. A variety of colors helps the

adult emphasize words or draw sketches that are easy to follow. Some educators like to have erasable pens in their kit because they make it easy to correct mistakes and still keep the paper nice and neat.

Post-It notes: It is recommended to have two sizes, in a variety of colors. Small, tab-sized Post-Its are nice for marking where you are looking on a sheet of paper to show the student. Post-Its can represent different ideas and can create the ability to move them around a worksheet page. Post-Its also allow the educator to add another layer of visual space when space is needed.

Mini white board or plastic sleeves: Although they are not necessary, they are nice to have. These reusable options can be harder to see than paper, but the downside of paper is you need a big stack. Use what feels most comfortable to you.

A mini white-board allows the teacher to continue to jot things down and quickly erase, revise, and fix. This is especially helpful if the teacher is actually needing to support the student in some practice before turning to the next steps. For example, if the adult is leading a round of practicing sight-words, writing and quickly erasing is efficient. Or, if brainstorming writing ideas needs to happen before the student starts a writing project, the white board works well.
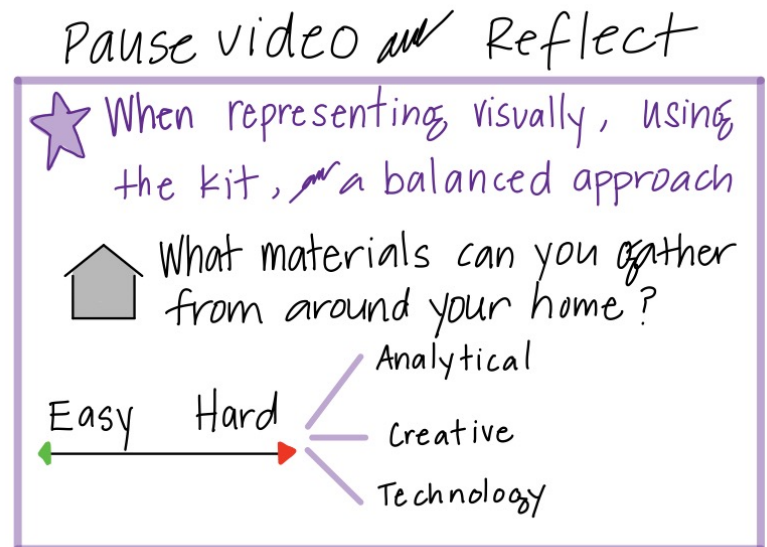
There are two cautions to consider when using a whiteboard. If there is something that you need to refer back to throughout the session, it is better to put it on a piece of paper, so you have it handy when you need to refer to it again. The other caution is there is a lot of erasing when using a whiteboard. The more erasing that takes place, the more the student's attention can wane.

If you don't have a white-board, take a regular piece of paper and put it in sheet protector. Voilà! You have a DIY "white-board."

Dry or Wet Erase Markers: If possible, have both thin line and thick line markers. Dry erase markers are more convenient than wet erase markers but can be lighter and harder to see. Wet erase markers are darker and clearer to see but are higher maintenance to erase.

Binder stand or binder clips: If binder clips are attached to each side of a mini whiteboard, it will stand up on a flat surface. This makes it easier if you want to continue to refer back to something created there. Binder stands or clips are also useful for propping up a binder with plastic sleeves. Standing up a binder with plastic sleeves or a mini whiteboard on a table helps keep the information easy to see and accessible if you want to refer back to it. You can buy a stand specifically made for binders and whiteboards at newmanagement.com.

Technology: Knowing how to share the screen from the adult computer makes it easy to utilize visuals found on the internet, including worksheets and supports that are associated with websites and apps that the school has purchased. In order to create visuals with icons and pictures, it is useful to have an iPad Pro with an Apple Pencil. There are many drawing apps, such as Notability, that can be used to create visuals live while the student watches. If the adult has access to a document camera, this invaluable tool is an efficient way to visually enhance learning and engagement with manipulatives.

Pause video and Reflect

★ When representing visually, using the kit, a balanced approach

🏠 What materials can you gather from around your home?

Easy ← → Hard — Analytical, Creative, Technology

Cyber Success

Now that you understand the importance of communicating visually and you have your visual kit compiled, you are ready to consider six steps to increasing the likelihood that academic support sessions will be a positive learning experience for the student. These six steps balance the importance of starting the session with a personal, adult-to-student connection and then segueing into academics in a way that fosters confidence and articulation.

Cyber Success

- ◆ Connect Personally
- ◆ Confirm Visually
- ◆ Start Simple
- ◆ Make a Statement
- ◆ Regulate Yourself
- ◆ Maintain Visual Rhythm

✦ Connect Personally

Start the support session with an opening chat or greeting that either includes the adult or the student sharing something in the personal realm (outside of school). This puts the initial emphasis on personhood and sends the message to students that they are a person first. In a crisis, people connect through the idea of person first – what's going on in my life so I can focus on the productivity of school. The greeting moves the nature of support from productivity as the top priority, to a balance of productivity and relationship. The adult sends the message that not only am I here to help you because it's my job, but I care about you and I want you to be successful – I want to support you. Options for opening chats might be asking about TV shows they've been watching, how they are spending outside time, what their siblings are up to, or what TikTok videos made them laugh, and so forth. Another way to connect with students personally when employing distance learning is to allow them to see your photos, artifacts, pets, family, etc. Here are just a few examples to consider:

- "It's good to see you. I was watching the news and I found out lots of people are getting dogs. If you had a dog, what you name it?"
- "An article I read online yesterday stated everybody is thinking that every day is the same and we are having trouble keeping track of days of the week. What is something different that happened to you today?"
- Showing a photo when you were their age is always fun.
- If you have old clothing, such as a prom dress or your favorite tie from years ago, students love to laugh at how styles have changed.

In addition to being thoughtful about the topic of connection, the student is more likely to feel the speaker's sincerity if they use a rolling voice pattern which author Michael Grinder calls the approachable voice. When the adult uses a rolling voice with calm breathing, their voice sounds curious and interested in the student's responses.

When time is limited, it is natural to be task-oriented, and skip this relational voice pattern; at the same time, ample research highlights the correlation between personal connections and increased comfort, academic risk-taking and higher engagement. Fostering this connection by conveying curiosity and interest with an approachable voice tone is time well-spent!
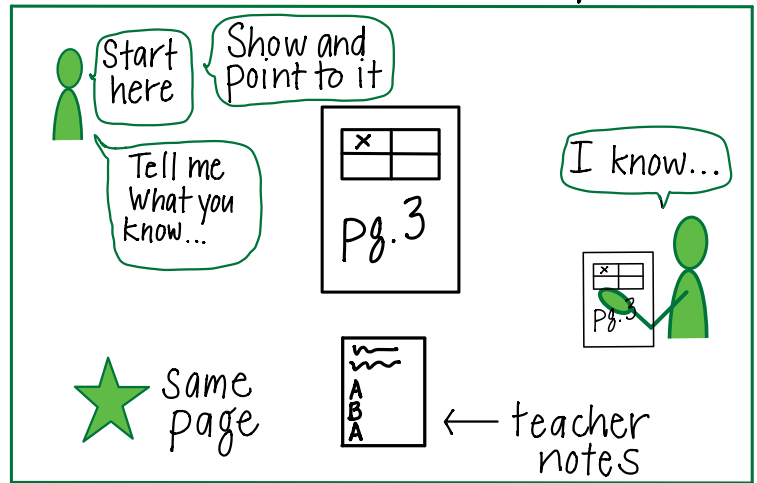
✦ Confirm Visually

Visuals can also be used to ensure the adult and student are on the same page from the get-go. To be one hundred percent certain you are both starting the journey at the same place, the adult can use a strategy for visual confirmation. This happens when the adult verbally and visually communicates the starting point before beginning instruction.

Immediately following this communication, the adult will ask the student to visually confirm that they are in the same starting place as the adult. When the adult skips over the process of visual confirmation, a frustration scenario can occur because there is a high chance the adult will begin instruction while the student is still trying to find their starting point. Part way into the instruction, the student becomes confused. The adult, trying to restore understanding verbally, discovers, after some back-and-forth, that the student is not following the instruction because they weren't at the correct starting point.

There are times when the starting communication begins with an existing book or handout. An example of visual confirmation in this case might be, "We are working on page 3, beginning in the top box. Take a look at my page." The adult then shows the page and pauses so the student can process what was said and shown. Before the adult jumps into teaching, the next crucial part is to ask the student to confirm by showing or pointing out that they are also on page 3 and know which box the adult is referring to.

Let's use the scenario of a student needing help understanding patterns in math. The adult writes the learning target at the top of the page and an example of an ABA pattern. The adult then holds up the paper or shares the screen and asks, "Is this accurate?" This easy starting point allows the adult to confirm with the student that they are on the same page. Sometimes the student is encouraged to write the starting point on their own paper. As the conversation continues and both the teacher and the student share knowledge around the topic, such as new patterns and how to extend simple patterns, the adult continues to add to the visual and follows up by asking the student, "Is this accurate, what else can we add to this?" These preemptive actions of confirmation ensure that there is shared understanding. Additionally, there are times when a student is getting support and there is not a book or handout. This is most common in writing assignments. In this case, the adult has to create the visual starting point by writing down initial information from the adult or student.
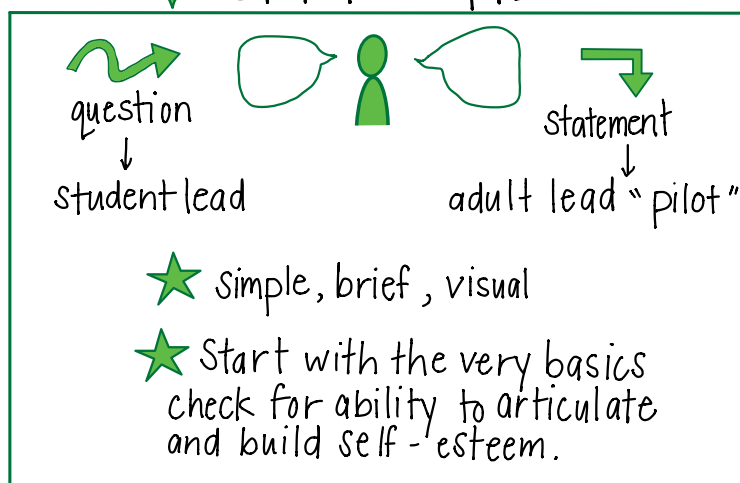
✦ Start Simple

In an online setting, it is more common for students to get academic support with something difficult for them versus reinforcement on content they understand or have mastered. There can be a lot of emotions like fear… anxiety… excitement…around learning new and challenging information, especially now that the student is also adjusting to the new format of learning virtually rather than in person. When students were in school, seeking help was in a more casual format and the adults were more readily available. With an online system, the student has to navigate many steps to get the help they need. When the adult is thoughtful about the initial interaction, they can positively impact the student's ability to remain calm and comfortable.

✦ Start Simple

question → student lead

statement → adult lead "pilot"

★ Simple, brief, visual

★ Start with the very basics check for ability to articulate and build self-esteem.

There are two ways to start the interaction: with a question, in a rolling, approachable voice, or with a statement, in a flat, credible voice. Whether or not the interaction starts with a question or statement, the interaction should begin with a component of the concept that is foundational – something simple and brief, in which the adult can go visual within the first phrase. The purpose of starting simple is to jump-start the student's ability to articulate their understanding of the concept. When they can interact with success from the beginning, the adult builds on existing confidence so the student is ready to engage in the upcoming learning conversation in a safe, comfortable way.

Using a statement assures the child that the adult is going to lead and provide the guidance. It is like leading someone through a dark room. Instead of asking them which way they want to go, the adult says, "We're going to go this way." Keep it simple and brief, matter-of-fact, and definitive. Immediately pair the statement with a visual. For example, in the scenario of a student learning how to find equivalent fractions, the foundational concept is the idea of "equal". In most cases the adult can reasonably assure the student knows that basic concept. This qualifies for a very low-level statement in which the underlying purpose is for the student to feel comfortable. The adult might lead with, "Our job is to discover things that are the same. We call that 'equal'." Follow up by writing the word "equal" paired with a simple icon that shows an example of what "equal" looks like to give the adult and student time to breathe and process knowing all will be ok.

If asking a question, the adult supports the student in taking the lead. In this case, to build confidence, it is important to make sure it's a question the adult believes the student can easily answer! When starting with a low level question, the student can feel successful and capable right away. It also gives the student a chance to speak, which supports calm breathing. Because we are over trained, in education, to ask only higher level questions, start by thinking about the challenging questions you *want* to ask the student. Then, save those questions for later! Instead, notch it down by backing up two or three levels. For example, if you want to ask, "What do you know about equivalent fractions?" you might back up and ask a simpler question such as, "When you look at this image of 1/2 and the image of 2/4, can you tell that these are the same?"

While it can be hard to remember our own learning process as a child, we can anchor this concept by thinking of how we learn as adults. Think of a time when you engaged in learning something new. For example, maybe you cooked a new recipe, learned a new sport or exercise, joined a writing group, or tried a new do-it-yourself home repair. When the directions start in a place that is too challenging, even adults tend to want to give up, especially when learning that the new skill is optional. Conversely, when the directions or instructions start with something that feels familiar, we are ready to engage. By giving this same gift to students, we can continue this new journey of online instruction as a team.

Pause Video and Reflect

Confirm Visually
tiny but crucial step! — record

1. What visual could you make yourself as a reminder?
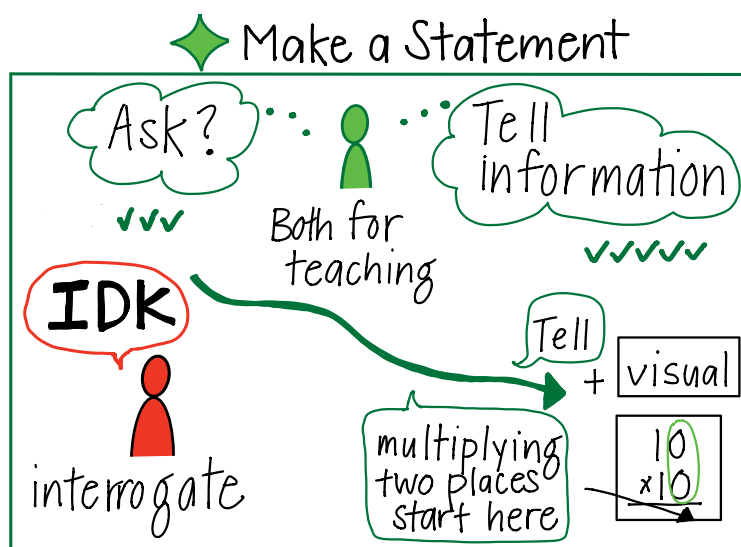2. Which students will this make the greatest difference for?

✦ Make a Statement

Once the adult has confirmed visually that they are at the same starting point, they can begin the journey of learning. The key at this point is to scaffold understanding in order to reach the goal of new and deeper knowledge. One small component of the large concept of scaffolding is to consider the role of questions and statements.

Both telling students information and asking them question are essential parts of teaching. Yet, for some reason, at times, there is a pattern of educators feeling like we need to ask questions, ask questions, ask questions, as a way for the student to do the work and the thinking versus the adult doing the thinking. We, as the supporting adult, may feel like we're "doing it for them" if we do a lot of telling of information through statements. As a result, we begin asking lots of questions. Anytime a teacher asks a series of questions, it may go on too long, bringing the student to the point of frustration because the questions feel like an interrogation.

Make a Statement

Ask? ✓✓   Both for teaching   Tell information ✓✓✓✓

IDK — interrogate

Tell + visual

multiplying two places start here

$\begin{array}{r} 10 \\ \times 10 \\ \hline \end{array}$

Let's imagine a frustration scenario in which the adult and student are tackling two-place multiplication with the partial product method. We chose this scenario because it is likely that the student's family, or at home adults, are unfamiliar with the concept. It might sound something like this:

The adult says, "Do you know what happens first?" And, the student says, "I don't know." The teacher replies with more questions, "Well, what do you remember? What does the book say? Have you re-read the information in the box on page 24?" And, pretty soon, a series of three questions that can't be answered by the student feels overwhelming. The student's stress level increases and their brain shuts down and learning stops.
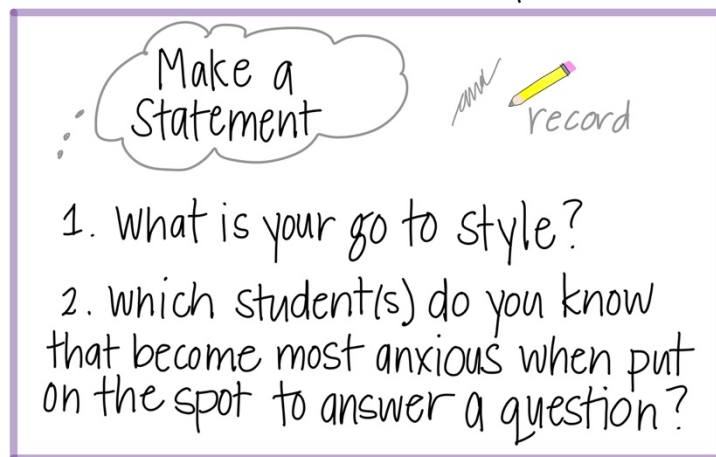
It is our duty as professional educators to figure out the balance between asking and telling that is needed to best serve the individual student in that moment. The supporting adult can shift any perception they have that making statements and telling information is "doing the thinking for the student" into the idea that making statements is a useful and helpful tool for re-teaching or re-acquainting the student with the content objective for the session. It is safest to start with one or two statements followed by a question. For example, "The first step is to identify the ones and tens place. Start here. Next is to draw the lines that guide you. Do you remember what should happen next?"

To find the balance between telling and asking, the adult can use these indicators:

- After the adult has made 1-2 statements, it is safe to try asking a question. If the student can answer the question, they have had enough telling. An even bigger indicator of readiness is that the student goes above and beyond in answering the question. The adult is free to continue with questions until the student gets stuck.

- If a student struggles with a question, this is an indicator that they need the adult to go back to re-teaching with a statement paired with a visual. This brings the student back to a stable point of understanding so that they are ready to move on with more learning.

Of course, educators understand that all students are different. As you get reacquainted with your students under the new distant learning model, you will begin to see the ways in which these changes have affected their learning style and what the best formula for supporting them will look like.
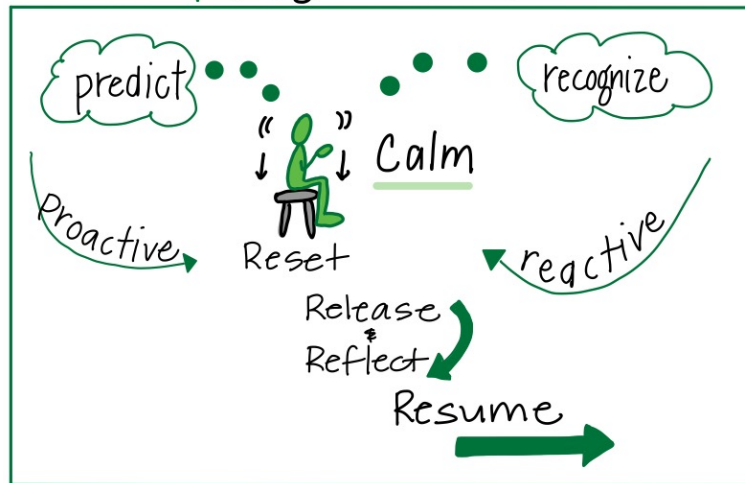

Pause Video and Reflect

Make a Statement — and record

1. What is your go to style?

2. Which student(s) do you know that become most anxious when put on the spot to answer a question?

✦ Regulate Yourself

While we all love our jobs as educators and miss when we cannot see our students in person, we know that engaging in challenging learning can be frustrating for the student and for us as adults. We want to go into our support sessions predicting that there will be times when we need to be aware of our bodies and thoughts, sense stress, and return to calm. When either the adult or the student is stressed, they naturally go into fight, flight or freeze and it is harder to think calmly and clearly. In these cases, it makes it more likely that the teacher will attempt to communicate in a way that overpowers rather than empowers students. We often talk to student about regulating their behavior. When it comes to distance learning, it is equally important to regulate our own adult stress response. We lovingly call this skill "Regulate Yourself."

✦ Regulate Yourself

predict — recognize
Proactive — Reset — Calm — reactive
Release & Reflect — Resume

The steps to Regulating Yourself include:

- Recognize/Predict
- Reset
- Release & Reflect
- Resume (with a smile)

The most sophisticated form of recognition is when the adult predicts that stress is likely to happen during a support session. If we predict that is the case, we can proactively regulate ourselves before the session even begins. By predicting we may be stressed, we reduce surprise. When we reduce being surprised by the stressful situation occurring, we are able to remain calm (self-regulate) and enhance our ability to think and be more strategic during potentially stressful support sessions.

Prior to joining the google hangout or zoom session, the adult can check their body's level of calm by moving in their chair to make sure they feel loose and fluid. Next, by taking a moment to release their breath, the adult can reflect on the specific session in a proactive way. Follow that by a brief moment to look over teaching materials. Finally, resume the process of initiating the meeting with a smile. When the adult smiles before initiating the meeting, the body releases endorphins that will help begin with positive feelings.

Another key to self-regulation is to really be able to recognize signs during the meeting of when the adult is moving from calm to a state of stress. There are indicators that the adult already may know about themselves. For example, they may begin to feel nervous and have a sense of frustration. There may be feelings of guilt of not knowing what to do to help the student understand.
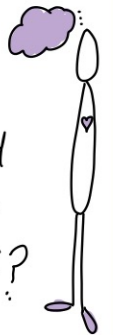
In addition, there are some physiological signs that are easy for adults to recognize. The first has to do with voice patterns. When you are feeling calm and your voice is rolling, you'll sound curious to the student. And, when you are feeling calm and your voice is flat and credible, you'll sound definitive, providing safety in the learning for the student. Yet, if your physiological response becomes stressed, your rolling voice will begin to sound like you are pleading. Conversely, your flat credible voice may sound frustrated. Those are indicators that you are moving out of your calm state.

Other indicators that the adult is moving from a calm state to a state of stress is that their body becomes stiff or more rigid in its movement, there is a loss of words or, alternatively, they become more verbose, which can lead to looping – repeating the same thing over and over. Sometimes you will also hear an increase in volume. All of these indicators will let the adult know that they need to reactively go back to self-regulating strategies that will bring their body back to a state of calm: reset by shifting in your chair (moving from side to side) and releasing your breath (exhale, then inhale). Then, take a moment to reflect on how to regain calm. Once equilibrium has been restored, resume the interaction with a smile to your student through the screen.

Pause video and Reflect

☆ Regulate Yourself

What are some of your indicators that you could be aware of to prompt you to regulate yourself?

The **CATALYST** Approach

✦ Maintain Visual Rhythm

For some of us, using visuals became a natural part of teaching live, with face-to-face students. And, we've had to rethink and re-organize how we can transfer that skill in a distancing learning situation. For others, the concept of communicating with visuals is new. For both groups, the question the adults may have is, "How much is too much? How many visuals are enough? How many colors, drawings, etc. do I need?"
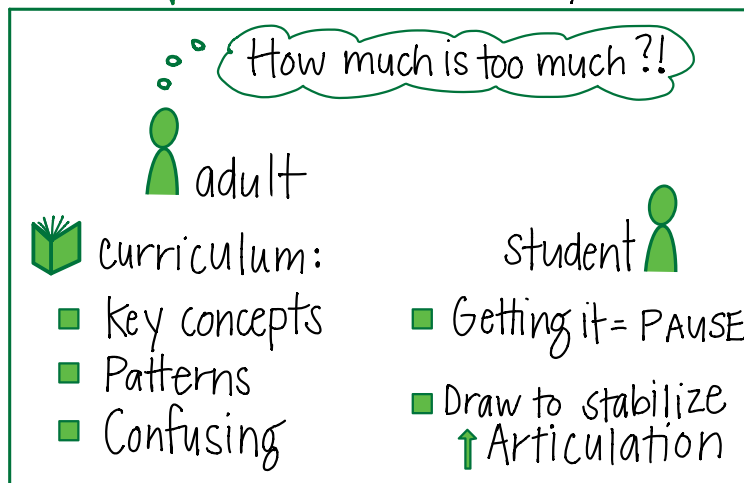
There are two variables that will guide your decision making: the curriculum and the student.

In regard to the curriculum, be ready with visuals that illustrate key concepts, patterns, and anything you predict might be confusing. These could include vocabulary words or phrases that are key to the student's being able to understand the content. In addition, an patterns and connections that are made easily with a brief icon will also help decrease confusion. Furthermore, based on experience with the content, create a visual for the part of the concept that is reliably and predictably confusing. This could be something the adult might even create in a reusable fashion ahead of time to use when they find themselves re-teaching the same concept over and over to different students.

The second variable is the student the adult is helping. When it comes to the student, the adult will want to adapt the visual delivery based on the student's reaction:

- If the student continues to be confused or at a loss for words, while using the visual, add color and/or details, or start a new visual.
- If the student is getting it, and the two of you are on a roll, you can reduce the addition of new visuals.
- If the student has an aha moment, the adult can capitalize on this breakthrough by drawing a visual that stabilizes the new understanding for the future.

✦ Maintain Visual Rhythm

How much is too much?!

adult

curriculum:
- Key concepts
- Patterns
- Confusing

student

- Getting it = PAUSE
- Draw to stabilize
↑ Articulation

Pause video and Reflect

☆ Maintain Visual Rhythm

In what ways does representing things visually increase understanding and collaboration

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Conclusion

Change can be tough. Distance learning, while not new, has taken shape in such a way as to impact students and adults more than ever. While some of the material here may illicit recognition ("I do that! I just didn't have a label for it."), other skills may uncover new learning. When we practice the skills we have (and, perhaps, now think about in different ways) and implement skills that are new to us, we can become even more intentional about the ways in which we find ourselves engaging with and supporting our students, especially in the digital realm – may it be of benefit. While we are engaging in new ways because we are not in physical proximity, as Brené Brown says, "Connection is why we're here; it is what gives purpose and meaning to our lives."*. The encouragement is to be curious. Give the strategies a try. You may discover new ways of enhancing your online interactions.

Pause video and Reflect

① What steps will you take to increase your ability to support success from a distance?

② Which of the steps to Cyber Success will be a focus?

*Daring Greatly, p. 253