STAR
A Number Writing Strategy


A strategy used to assist students in recalling, reciting, and writing numerals.

**Step 1: Pretest and Obtain a Commitment to Learn the Strategy**
- Observation or formal assessment - the Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Early Development (Brigance, 1978).
- After the child has written 0-9, the teacher, showing a chart of correctly formed numerals, brings the differences to the child's attention.
- Show numbers as prices to explain how unacceptable it is to make them incorrectly.
- The student can make a commitment to learning a strategy for writing numbers.

**Step 2: Describe the Strategy**
- Formation of numerals is taught first using multisensory experiences.
- The teacher demonstrates the formation of a selected numeral while reciting its associated saying.
- The child repeats the saying while forming the numeral:
  1. In the air with large motor movements
  2. Using sand, clay, sandpaper, crayon on paper held over a screen, and a marker
  3. Finally, pencil and paper
- Teach the STAR strategy for when the student is unable to recall the correct formation.
  # S = Stop. Stop and ask myself what I am expected to do (for example, write the number that the teacher is saying).
  # T = Think. Think of using a saying to help in forming the number.
  # A = Ask. Ask myself which saying should be used for this number.
  # R = Recite. Recite the saying while I write the number.
- The teacher should point out various times the STAR strategy can be used, and demonstrate each step.
- A STAR Strategy Card can be made with the steps of the strategy on one side and textured numerals with the saying on the other side. If the child is unable to read, a simple drawing of each step can be used instead of writing the words.
**Step 3: Model the Strategy**
- Demonstrate how the strategy is used, i.e.
  
  I have to write a seven. I get mad when I write it backwards. I want to do it right so my mom will be proud of me. I’m going to use my new STAR strategy. The first thing, I have to do is **Stop** and ask myself what I have to do. O.K., I have to write a good seven on this line. Now I have to **Think**. Let’s see, to remember which way the seven goes, I can use one of the Sayings. Now I have to **Ask** myself which Saying to use. Which one is it? I know, seven is the one with the man who made a line at the top. Now I have to **Recite** the saying while I do it. Here’s my pencil. The man made a line across the top, and then he slid down the hill to the left. That’s a good seven. I know it’s facing the right way. I’ll check it with the card to make sure.

The teacher should model other numerals, this time stopping after the varying STAR steps to ask the children, “What should I tell myself to do next?”—thus giving the children practice in self-verbalization.

**Step 4: Memorization of the Strategy**
- Through verbal rehearsal, students can memorize the sayings and the STAR strategy. The STAR Strategy Card can be used as a cue during rehearsal.

**Step 5: Practice with Controlled Materials**
- Practice one number at a time: dictate, simple math, or answer a question
- The teacher should provide feedback on the elements of the strategy that are being done correctly and corrective feedback to improve performance.

**Step 6: Practice with Grade-Appropriate Tasks**
- The child should apply the strategy to classroom materials.
- Frequent opportunities for practice are needed:
  - writing multi-digit numbers, numbering pages or lines, completing math problems,
  - writing the date, or pretending to operate a store

**Step 7: Administration of a Posttest**
- Require the child to write the numerals and compare the results with the pretest.
- Show the child the results and explain that they need to remember and use the strategy whenever they need to write a number.

**Step 8: Generalization**
- Monitor the use of the strategy in other situations
- Children can report when they have use the strategy outside the classroom
- Review the steps periodically to encourage generalization
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*Self-instructions for forming numerals*

To make 0: The woman went around in a circle until she got home.

To make 1: The man went straight down, like a stick.

To make 2: The woman went right and around, slid down the hill to the left, then make a line across the ground.

To make 3: The man went right and around, then around again.

To make 4: The woman went down the street, turned to the right, then back to the top for a straight ride down.

To make 5: The man went down the street, around the corner, and his hat blew off.

To make 6: The woman made a curve and then a circle at the bottom.

To make 7: The man made a line across the top, then slid down the hill to the left.

To make 8: The woman made a half circle to the left, another to the right, and then she found her way back up to the top again.

To make 9: The man made a small circle and then a straight line down.