

Digital Tools and Strategies to Improve Organisation

“For every minute spent in organising, an hour is earned.”



– Benjamin Franklin

A common challenge that often prevents students from completing their work is their lack of executive functions.

Executive functions are abilities that allow us to use our environment to our advantage. Some of these abilities are for (1) organisation, while others are for (2) regulation.

1. **Organisation** deals with gathering and structuring resources.
2. **Regulation** involves evaluating your resources and modulating your responses to the environment.

Common Student Organisational Challenges	Examples
Difficulty in planning	Making a packing list, giving directions, or writing a recipe, etc.
Difficulty in abstract thinking	Seeing things from someone else’s perspective. For instance, thinking about dogs in general and the role of dogs in the world
Difficulty in arranging items and maintaining systematic methods	Designating a distinct folder or notebook for each subject in school and keeping it in order
Difficulty in selecting, processing, storing, and/or retrieving information (working memory issues)	Remembering and performing instructions for a step-by-step drill in gym class
Managing time	Organising a schedule, completing tasks on time, finishing a multi-step project before the deadline without compromising on quality

A Framework to Help Guide us toward Supporting Students

UDL Guideline 6 focuses on expanding executive function capacity and includes several checkpoints listed below that help teachers focus on improving organisational skills.

- [goal-setting](#) (6.1)
- [planning and developing strategy](#) (6.2)
- [managing information and resources](#) (6.3)

Providing Support for Students

Support	Examples	UDL Connection
Structure an organised physical workspace for class	Set up charts, calendars, schedules, visible timers, posters with key information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.2 Support planning and strategy development
Develop and model workflows	Provide recommendations and instructions for processes to use various tools to complete tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.3 Facilitate managing information and resources
Structure a digital home page for students to access resources	Create a blog page or even just a public Google Doc that offers links to curated project resources, such as demonstrations or explanations	6.3 Facilitate managing information and resources

	Digital Tools & Strategies to Support Organisation			
	Tools	Features	Suggestions for Use with Students	UDL Connections
1	Evernote and Google Keep .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital notebook-style organisation Create notebooks with notes Add tags or use naming conventions to further organise notes Create stacks of notebooks that are related Create task lists with reminders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students can create checklists of goals and create actionable to-do lists. Digital notebook-style organiser for ideas, favourite quotes, etc. Digital portfolio for student work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guide appropriate goal-setting (6.1) Support planning and strategy development (6.2) Facilitate managing information and resources (6.3)
2	Evernote Web Clipper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Snip and tag any content from the internet into your notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When finding information about a particular topic online, this is a good way to save clips and links to information sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate managing information and resources (6.3)
3.	Remind/Seesaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers provide text message-based updates and reminders to parents and students Parents can similarly respond to teachers via text messaging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share class announcements such as field trips or special projects Another way to engage students and parents is by giving them cues to continue conversations about topics at home. For eg. notify parents: "Today, we learned about rabbits. Ask your kid about rabbits to – continue the conversation at home." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support planning and strategy development (6.2) Facilitate managing information and resources (6.3)

4.	Google Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides online storage space for all types of media • Folders can be colour-coded or tagged with keywords 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create folders with study materials organized by topics and units, give access to all students • Invite students to add useful content in the folders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate managing information and resources (6.3)
6.	Befocused	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get things done by setting goals and breaking them into individual tasks with set work times, separated by short breaks • Uses pomodoro technique • Syncs across devices • Shows time spent, progress with a bar graph 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A scoreboard showing the amount of student time invested in a project or spent developing a particular skill • Track progress for larger multi-step projects like research reports that include writing or structuring presentations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide appropriate goal-setting (6.1) • Support planning and strategy development (6.2)