

Focus Test: Teacher Instructions

Activity 8.1

This activity can be done in class with the teacher conducting the activity. It can be also be completed online by going to the website at:

<http://www.SportPsychSchool.com> → Student Zone → Focus Test

The website has a flash movie for Trial 1, 2, 3, and 4 including the various kinds of distractions (auditory and visual). Computers need to have a flash player (most already do) and the speakers need to be turned on to view the movies. Whether the students complete it with the teacher or online, the following worksheet can be used for the students to record their scores. This focus test can be effectively used as both a pre and post test of the students' focus skills.

Materials:

- Photocopies of worksheet
- Computers with internet access and speakers (to do the online version of the activity)
 - This could be in a computer lab with all students using their own computer, OR
 - This could be done with one computer being projected to the front of the room.All the students focusing on the same screen.
- A CD player with a music, a CD, a TV, VCR or DVD player, and a movie (for the teacher-led version of the activity)

Procedure:

- Students do the focus test once to start the unit – *Pre-test*
- Students select one or two of the “Exercises to Improve your Focus” listed in Chapter 8
- Students practice their selected focusing exercise for a week. (See Worksheet 8.1 for a log to record how many minutes they spend practicing each day.)
- After a week of practice, students again do the focus test – *Post-test*
- Compare *pre-* and *post-test* to determine if improvement has been made

Instructions for students: Sitting comfortably, close your eyes (except on the third trial) and focus on your breathing. Focus on the sound of your breathing, the feeling of your diaphragm, etc. Now focus on the number “one.” You may visualize the number “one” or repeat the word to yourself. When you first become aware that your mind has left the proper focus bring yourself back to the breathing and switch to the number “two.” The next time you get distracted, switch to “three.” Etc. When the teacher tells you to stop, record the number you got to. We will repeat it several times.

Trial 1: Complete this trial with eyes closed and in an environment free from distractions. This trial represents how easily the student gets distracted by internal factors

Trial 2: Complete this trial with eyes closed. Teacher should provide some auditory distraction such as music playing, crowd noise, etc.

Trial 3: Complete this trial with eyes open. Teacher should provide some visual distraction like a movie playing but no sound.

Trial 4: Complete this trial with eyes open. Teacher should provide some visual distraction like a movie playing, with sound

Find more at:

www.SportPsychSchool.com

Name: _____ Per. _____ Date: _____

Focus Test: Student Worksheet

Activity 8.1

For the online version of the test:

Go to <http://www.SportPsychSchool.com>

Click on → Student Zone

Click on → Focus Test

Instructions: Sitting comfortably, close your eyes (except for Trial 3) and focus on your breathing. Focus on the sound of your breathing, the feeling of your diaphragm, etc. Now focus on the number “one.” You may visualize the number “one” or repeat the word to yourself. When you first become aware that your mind has left the proper focus bring yourself back to the breathing and switch to the number “two.” The next time you get distracted, switch to “three.” Etc. When the teacher tells you to stop, record the number you got to. We will repeat it several times.

	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Trial 1 (internal):		
Trial 2 (auditory):		
Trial 3 (visual):		
Trial 4 (audio-visual)		

See reverse side for evaluating your results

Find more at:

www.SportPsychSchool.com

Evaluating the Results

Activity 8.1

Score 1 – 4	Exceptional
Score 5 – 8	Above Average
Score 9 – 13	Average
Score 14 – 17	Easily Distracted
Score 18 +	Very Seriously Distracted

Trial 1 represents how easily you get distracted from internal sources

Trial 2 represents how easily you get distracted from auditory sources

Trial 3 represents how easily you get distracted from visual sources

Trial 4 represents how easily you get distracted from audiovisual sources

Look at which trial was your best and worst to give yourself an idea about your strength and weakness.

If you scored high, there's no need to push the panic button. These numbers are not precise. A low number may represent that you lost focus and never returned your focus to move on to the next number (a bad thing). And a high number may represent that, even if you lose focus often, you are good at bringing it back.

Armed with the knowledge of what distracts you most easily you can prepare countermeasures. And knowing how you concentrate best can help you take advantage of your strengths.