Tricky Transitions Made Timely: Smoothing Out the Rough Edges of Classroom Transitions

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Table of Contents

Description of Teaching Context.......................................................... 1
Main Wondering and Sub-Questions.......................................................... 2
Data Collection and Analysis..................................................................... 2
Explanation of Findings............................................................................. 7
Reflections and Implications for Future Practice................................. 13
Appendices:
   A. Annotated Bibliography................................................................. 15
   B. Inquiry Brief................................................................................... 17
   C. Strategy List and Descriptions....................................................... 20
   D. Examples of Observation Notes..................................................... 22
   E. Transcript of Class Meeting #2....................................................... 29
   F. Teacher Surveys.............................................................................. 33
   G. Student Survey and Results............................................................ 35
   H. Example of Student Interview Notes and Results......................... 37
Description of Teaching Context

My second grade class at Gray’s Woods Elementary School consists of twenty-three students, ranging from the ages of seven to nine years old. Eleven students are female and twelve students are male.

Academically, the majority of my class is low achieving in most academic subjects. My students’ IQs range from 83 to 128, with an average score of 99. This is about ten points lower than the other two second grade classes at Gray’s Woods. There are no students that stand out as strong in all academic areas. Approximately one-third of my class has learning or attention issues. I have six students who receive Title One services, five that receive Instructional Support Team services, and one who leaves the classroom frequently for Learning Support. The reading levels of my students are also diverse. Eight students participated in Jumpstart at the beginning of the year and are reading below grade level, four are in a higher-level independent literature circle, and the remaining students are more or less at a second grade level.

The students in my classroom are also diverse when it comes to behavior. As a whole, the class can be extremely talkative. They tend to socialize frequently throughout the day, especially during transitions. The students often need to be redirected and kept on-task during these times. Approximately six students have attention issues and have a harder time than most focusing and staying on-task. Three of these students have been identified with ADD/ADHD, but none are on medication. Two students display aggressive and argumentative behavior and provoke others, and one student tends to exhibit explosive emotional behavior at various times during the day.

Although we have attempted to create and maintain a positive classroom community, the interactions that occur during transitions have become increasingly negative, involving conflict and disrespectful behavior that can be potentially damaging to our learning environment.
Main Wondering and Sub-Questions

Main Wondering: How can I learn to use efficient transitions to maximize students’ attention and motivation, to maintain a positive classroom environment, and reduce time off-task?

Sub-Questions:

- Which transitions would be best for specific parts of the day (i.e., morning meeting/calendar, lining up, cleaning up, switching activities, dismissal, etc.)?
- What specific times of the day or week do my students transition well?
- What are the effects of allowing students to take ownership of transitioning?
- How can I use positive role models and positive reinforcement to improve transition time and help the students who negatively influence our transitions?

Data Collection and Analysis

I collected information throughout my inquiry in six ways. These include literature review, observational notes, class meetings, teacher surveys, student surveys, and student interviews.

Literature Review Collection

To prepare for my inquiry, I conducted extensive research on classroom management and transitioning. I read several books, journals, and website articles to learn about different strategies and techniques, philosophies of discipline and management, and suggestions for challenging students who have trouble transitioning. Descriptions of these resources and how they benefited my inquiry can be found in the annotated bibliography (Appendix A).

Analysis

From these resources, I developed a list of possible strategies and techniques that I could try with my class (Appendix C). After compiling this list, I went through and analyzed each one to
decide which I would attempt to use. This required me to think about my teaching context, including the students who were aggressive, defiant, overly emotional, or struggled with attention problems, and how I could help them transition successfully. As I implemented each strategy and saw what worked and what did not, I decided whether to continue, discontinue, or make modifications to the strategy.

**Observational Notes**

**Collection**

Throughout the course of my inquiry I recorded observational notes during and after transition times (Appendix D). I made sure I always had my clipboard and timer ready for whenever a transition occurred. The notes included the date and time, the length of time the transition took, the type of transition it was (transitioning from X activity to Y activity), the strategy that was used, and any student or teacher behavior that stood out. I began these notes as a way to collect baseline data and continued to keep them to measure change with each strategy that I tried afterwards.

I also recorded observational notes when I visited other teachers’ classrooms. I went to the rooms of different teachers at Gray’s Woods as well as other elementary schools in the district, to observe their classroom management styles and techniques for transitioning. These observations helped me build my list of possible strategies to try (Appendix C), and allowed me to see experienced teachers use them in action.

**Analysis**

The first step I took in analyzing my observational notes was to split them up into two piles: baseline and post-intervention. Next, I read through the baseline data to see if there were any patterns that emerged, regarding the time of the day, the activity that we were switching to or from, the directions that were given, or re-occurring student behavior. I also calculated the range
of transition times and how long our average transition took in the classroom. Then, I repeated this process with my post-intervention data, looking for more patterns and the results of specific strategies that I tried, as well as the range and average of our transition times to see what was working.

Class Meetings

Collection

I facilitated two class meetings during the course of my inquiry. The first was to draw attention to the time-wasting that was occurring during transitions, and to hear the students’ thoughts on this issue. After a particularly difficult dismissal transition one afternoon, we discussed the problem the following morning. I shared the amount of time that our dismissal transition had taken, and the students were shocked and surprised by this number. This motivated the students to think of ways we could improve this transition. Many of them suggested different strategies and ideas for our class to try that I wrote down for future use.

I held the second class meeting to see what the students thought about how they had improved since the first meeting a month and a half earlier. I recorded our conversation on Garage Band so that I would have the students’ comments word-for-word to refer back to later (Appendix E). The students shared what had been helpful, what helps keep them motivated and focused, and what they think we still need to work on.

We also had several informal conversations about our progress and the steps we could take next as opportunities for discussion and issues arose.

Analysis

I used these discussions as an informal way to collect data and gauge how the students were feeling about the transitions in our class. According to the Developmental Studies Center, “Class meetings help students gain greater understanding of themselves and others by providing a
supportive environment in which they feel ‘safe’ discussing personal interests, concerns, plans, and feelings” (4). Since second graders feel able to speak more freely in this type of setting rather than a survey, I took their comments seriously, recorded them, and used them as a way to plan the next steps that I was going to take. We spoke honestly about what was working and what was not, and the reasons why. Since one of my goals was to give the students ownership over their transitioning, these conversations helped guide my inquiry and made it a student-centered process.

**Teacher Survey**

**Collection**

As part of my baseline data collection, I developed a survey for the teachers at Gray’s Woods asking about how transitions were used in their rooms (Appendix F). I asked them to specify the grade that they taught, the average length of their classroom transitions, difficult times of the day or types of transitions that they noticed, the strategies that worked for them, and how many of their students had trouble transitioning.

**Analysis**

I received nine surveys back from the teachers in my school, which was not as many as I had hoped. However, the ones that I did receive were from a variety of grades and included some specialist teachers as well, which I found very useful in adding to my list of strategies to try (Appendix C). It also gave me a better idea of some of the struggles that other teachers faced when trying to transition and how they attempted to remedy them.

**Student Surveys**

**Collection**

I also created a survey that asked the students about their own behavior during transitions (Appendix F). They gave themselves grades from A to E, based on how they thought they acted during various transitional times throughout the day. I distributed the surveys to the students after
our initial class meeting in which we discussed the problem I was noticing. They filled out the survey in small groups during reading stations, and I made sure that I explained each question very clearly, answered any clarifying questions, and encouraged them to respond honestly. A month and a half later, I gave the students the same survey to see if they thought they had improved at all.

**Analysis**

I began to analyze the data from these surveys by creating a table to organize and display the students’ before and after responses (Appendix G). I wanted to look at perceptions of their own improvement at a whole-class and an individual level to see what patterns emerged. To do this, I coded each child’s survey responses with a +, -, or 0, depending on whether they graded themselves higher, lower, or the same as before on each of the seven questions. This gave me a good idea about how each student was feeling about his or her improvement during transitional times. Then, I added up all the +s, -s, and 0s to figure out what percentages of the class were feeling like they had improved, stayed the same, or gotten worse as a whole. I also looked at whole-class responses to each question to see if there were any patterns that I noticed during specific parts of the day. To do this, I counted the number of students who gave themselves a better, worse, or same grade for each type of transition throughout the day. This helped me see which parts of the day the students felt they had improved and which were still difficult for them.

**Follow-Up Interviews**

**Collection**

I interviewed eight students after the initial survey to deepen my understanding of their perspectives of transitions in our classroom. I selected these students based on survey responses that I was curious to learn more about. I also chose students who were leaders and positive role models in our room, as well as the students that were negative influences, since these two groups of students related to one of my sub-wonderings. I asked four questions that focused on how these
eight students felt they contributed to transitions in our room, what suggestions they had for improvement, and what they would like to do with the time that we save (Appendix H).

**Analysis**

First, I went through my interview notes to see if there were any commonalities. I recorded the students’ responses to each question in a series of tables (Appendix H), which helped me see patterns in their thinking as well as the range of ideas that were present. This allowed me to see what parts of the day I needed to target, and what strategies the students thought were effective. It also provided me with a list of possible rewards and activities to use with the time that is saved.

**Explanation of Findings: Claims and Evidence**

**CLAIM 1:** When students are aware of time, they are more likely to stay on-task and transition efficiently.

*Evidence 1A:* As I began to collect baseline data on the transitions in my room through observational notes, it was clear that my students were not aware of the amount of time they were wasting each day. When I brought it to their attention at the class meeting and shared some of the timings I had taken, their behavior during transitions immediately improved. My baseline data showed that before intervention, our transition time ranged from 4 minute and 40 seconds to 10 minutes and 50 seconds, with an average time of 7 minutes and 33 seconds. The transitions that occurred after our class meeting ranged from 25 seconds to 3 minutes and 40 seconds, and the average time dropped to 1 minute and 50 seconds.

*Evidence 1B:* This significant change can also be attributed to the students’ growing awareness of time due to certain strategies that I used. Two strategies in particular, “Beat the Clock” and “Counting Down” (Appendix C), involved the students transitioning within a set period of time. Since the students were aware of the amount of time they had to complete the transition, they
moved more quickly and efficiently. In all but one instance that I used the “Beat the Clock” strategy, the students were able to beat the timer. I was also successful when using the “Counting Down” strategy, with most students finishing by the time I got to 2 or 1. These methods are effective because the students are focused on getting where they need to be within a designated amount of time and have less time to be off-task.

CLAIM 2: When students are given a role in transition decisions, their attitude is more positive and transitions become more efficient.

Evidence 2A: I noticed a significant difference in transition times, motivation, and the classroom environment when I began to involve the students in transition decision-making. This included the amount of time we should give ourselves, the steps the students should take, and the specific ways they should move. Below is an example of my notes from a particular transition in which the students decided what we would do. Giving students a role in how we would transition during dismissal reduced the amount of time our end-of-day routine took by 71%, from 10 minutes and 50 seconds to 3 minutes and 6 seconds.

Date: Friday, 2/29/08  
Time: 1:50 p.m.  
Type of Transition: Getting ready for home before library  
Length of Transition: 3 minutes 6 seconds  
Strategy Used: The students wanted to try having two desk sets put up their chairs first, and two sets go to their mailboxes first.  
Additional Notes: They love to choose their own strategy and the students try hard not to let down the person who selected it.

Alfie Kohn (1996) supports this claim when he says that, “Students learn how to make good choices by making good choices, not by following directions… they are more likely to go along with a request when they have some choice about how to carry it out” (78). Allowing the students to play a role in the decision-making process is an important part of building a classroom community and a positive learning environment. Kohn goes on to explain that, “Kids tend to be
more respectful when their need to make decisions is respected; they are likely to be better behaved when there is no need for them to assert their autonomy” (81). Giving students a say in how transitions are run in our room helps build mutual respect between teacher and student, as well as between the students themselves as they work together to find solutions. This respect is necessary to maintain a positive and productive classroom environment.

*Evidence 2B:* Transitions are more efficient when students are not only involved in choosing the strategy that is used, but when they also have a say in what they can earn with the time they save. Through our class meetings and student interviews, the students came up with ideas for how they would like to spend the time that they end up saving. Below are the responses from my interviews when the students were asked: *What kinds of things would you like to do with the time we save?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extra recess</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group game</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special day</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing/reading time</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch a video</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual choice time</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After bringing up these options with the whole class, the students decided that they would like to use their time for extra recess, and we talked about why having that incentive helped them and made transitioning easier. Below is an excerpt from our class meeting (Appendix D) that explains some students’ thinking about this idea.

*Amanda:* Remember when we decided we could get extra recess? I think that’s motivating people a little more when they hear that. It’s motivating me.

*Miss Allen:* So that is something that is really working for you. What else is helping you?

*Lauren:* When you say when we’re all on the carpet and you tell us we could earn our extra recess, and we really want that extra time to play, so we are like, “Okay let’s do this, we can be focused” and we do it.

9
Since involving students in transition decisions, I have seen students’ excitement level, motivation to transition quickly, and eagerness to share ideas increase and improve our classroom climate.

**CLAIM 3:** There is a discrepancy between students’ perceptions and teacher-collected data about which types of transitions throughout the school day are more difficult for students to complete.

**Evidence 3A:** In my student interviews, I asked: *During what activities/parts of the day is it hardest to follow directions and switch activities?* The eight students responded:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right after lunch</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After recess</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dismissal</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lining up</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning routine</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaning up</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked to elaborate on their choices, the students said transitioning back into school activities after lunch or recess was difficult because they feel “all wound up”. One of the most common reasons for choosing morning routine, cleaning up, lining up, and dismissal was because of “friends talking to me and distracting me”. Another popular reason for choosing morning or dismissal routine was that “there are a lot of steps and a lot to remember”.

After I gave the second student survey, I saw a complete picture of each type of transition that occurs during the day and the students’ opinions on whether they have gotten easier and harder. I noticed that the students’ opinions of themselves had not changed much. The majority of my students either kept their rating the same or decreased it for the following categories: morning routine, getting started on work right away, not socializing, lining up, cleaning up, and dismissal.

**Evidence 3B:** Since my observational notes included the time of day and type of transition that was occurring, I was able to see patterns that emerged across different parts of the day. I noticed that my students were able to transition more quickly during two times of the day- first thing in the morning and right after lunch. Times increased and the students had more difficulty as the day
went on, culminating in the longest transitions taking place during late morning before lunch and late afternoon before dismissal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Day</th>
<th>Average Transition Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early morning</td>
<td>0:49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late morning</td>
<td>2:24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early afternoon</td>
<td>0:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late afternoon</td>
<td>2:55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This pattern that I noticed conflicts with how my students were feeling about transitions in my room. In the interviews and surveys, most students still cited the early morning and early afternoon as areas of difficulty, among others, but my timings and notes were not reflecting this. I began to wonder why this might be, and I think that along with the growing awareness of time and focus on efficient transitions, the students are harder on themselves when they evaluate their behavior during these times. My data clearly shows that the students are improving their transition times, so this discrepancy is an area that puzzles me and that I am interested in pursuing further.

**CLAIM 4: Positive comments and recognition for students who transition well improves the classroom environment and keeps all students on track.**

*Evidence 4A:* Throughout my inquiry, I tried to focus on making positive comments to help improve our class community and make our transitions more efficient. I recorded in my observational notes when I used positive reinforcement or made encouraging comments towards certain students. I found that these transitions were significantly shorter than when I did not make positive comments, decreasing our average transitional time from 3 minutes and 43 seconds to 2 minutes. I noticed that when I praised a particular student or group of students for transitioning well, the students became more aware of their own behavior and would correct it. Below is an example where I purposefully did not use any positive language, followed by a time where I did.

**Date:** Wednesday, 2/20/08  
**Time:** 11:40 a.m.  
**Type of Transition:** Switching from working on wetland mural to getting ready for lunch
Length of Transition: 7 minutes 11 seconds  
Strategy Used: “When the timer goes off, start getting ready for lunch.” I purposely did not give specific directions to see what would happen and how long it would take.  
Additional Notes:  
- Very loud and chaotic; felt stressful and rushed  
- Unorganized

Date: Friday, 2/29/08  
Time: 10:50 a.m.  
Type of Transition: Cleaning up from indoor recess and starting science  
Length of Transition: 1 minute 50 seconds  
Strategy Used: I told the students to work together to clean up and beat the timer that was set for 2 minutes. I made positive comments to students who were cleaning up quickly and helping their classmates.  
Additional Notes:  
- Using a lot of positive praise seems to help them move quicker.

Evidence 4B: One of my main classroom management strategies was choosing a ‘mystery person’ from a cup of popsicle sticks that had the students’ names on them (Appendix C). I introduced this idea to the class as a way to hold the students accountable for their actions when they were transitioning. Below is an example from my notes on a day when I used this technique:

Date: Friday 3/28/08  
Time: 1:30 p.m.  
Type of Transition: Switching from math activities to getting ready for recess  
Length of Transition: 3 minutes 15 seconds  
Strategy Used: I told the students that I chose a stick and would be watching a mystery person to see if they cleaned up well and got seated right away.  
Additional Notes: The mystery person did a great job, stayed on-task, helped friends clean up, and sat down when she was finished, so she earned the class 2 extra minutes of recess. I shared this with the class and they were very appreciative and positive towards her.

The classroom community improved after I began to implement this strategy, because students encouraged each other to do their best and thanked the person who earned the extra time. This system of peer reinforcement was effective, because it motivated the students to do well for the benefit of themselves and their classmates, instead of just to please the teacher. In this excerpt from our second class meeting, a student discusses why she thinks the sticks work for our class.

Morgan: When you pull out a stick, I think that it makes me and all of the class behave, because if it’s them they need to be good so that we can earn things for the class.
I have also been successful in using the ‘mystery person’ beyond just transitions, and it works as a
general classroom management tool as well. I often find the students asking me if I can pick a
stick, because it helps to keep them focused when they know they may be the mystery person.

**Reflections and Implications for Future Practice**

This inquiry experience was an eye-opener for my students and myself. Although I knew
that our class was wasting valuable instructional time with inefficient transitions, it was not until I
started regularly timing them that I realized exactly how bad the situation was. Although they are a
small part of the day, transitions are an extremely important element that can make or break the
atmosphere and tone of the classroom and the school day. When the teacher has an awareness of
time management and plans for organized and quick transitions, she is able to use time more
efficiently and take steps to minimize off-task behavior. I truly believe that my students have a
better concept of time now and have learned that it is important to use it wisely. I hope that this.idea stays with them throughout their lives, since it is an integral part of school and life in general.

In my future classroom, I plan to set the students up for transitioning success at the
beginning of the year by setting up expectations for quick and efficient transitions right away. I
also plan on involving them throughout the process of developing our routines and procedures as
we figure out together what works for the class. Throughout my inquiry, I have noticed myself
becoming increasingly more aware of passing time and making sure to use it efficiently. I can
recognize what wasted time looks, sounds, and feels like, and I can to take steps to eliminate it. I
now have a toolbox filled with a range of strategies to use, and I can think quickly about which
strategy to use depending on the activity, my students’ moods and needs, and other factors.
I feel confident that I will no longer be wasting large amounts of school time each day, and I know that I can manage transitions effectively and in a positive manner.

Although I learned a great deal during my inquiry, it did not fully answer all of my questions. I still have some wonderings that were partially unanswered due to inconclusive evidence.

- Which transitions would be best for specific parts of the day?
- How can I continue to help those students who contribute to our unsuccessful transitions?
- Why is there a discrepancy between the teacher and students’ perceptions of the transitioning improvement that is occurring in our room and how can I resolve it?

I have also developed some new wonderings during the course of my investigation.

- Is there a way to intrinsically motivate students to transition effectively that is not related to an external reward?
- What would transitions look like if these strategies had been implemented in the beginning of the year and expectations were set right away?
- Would the effective strategies that I found work for older children? Younger children?

Throughout the rest of this year and my first few years teaching, I will continue to explore these ideas to answer my questions and make my classroom routines and procedures more efficient. As a beginning teacher who is trying to find her own teaching voice and style of classroom management, I look forward to engaging in more teacher inquiry as new wonderings arise to improve my classroom and grow professionally.
Appendices

Appendix A: Annotated Bibliography


This book discusses discipline techniques for challenging students. It includes how to effectively manage children that are aggressive, defiant, clingy, and/or have attention problems. Since my classroom has a good amount of these types of students, this will be a useful source to have throughout the process of my inquiry. It will help me better understand these types of students and the strategies I can use to help them transition successfully.

Developmental Studies Center. (1996). *Ways we want our class to be: Class meetings that build commitment to kindness and learning*. Oakland, CA: Author.

This book discusses the use of class meetings as a way to build community, responsibility, and cooperation in the classroom. It outlines the different types of meetings, their components, and how to facilitate them. One my areas of concern is the transition from school to home at the end of the day. Since I have thought about using an afternoon meeting as a way to make this transition smoothly and positively, this book will be helpful in giving me ideas about ways I could incorporate these types of meetings into my classroom. I also plan to use class meetings throughout the rest of the year to discuss the strategies that are working in our classroom and the progress that we have made. I hope that these meetings will help me answer my sub-wondering about the effects of giving students ownership over their transitions.


This book contains an overview of classroom management techniques. It includes how to establish routines, give effective instructions, and use appropriate body language and questioning to control your class. This source will be used in my inquiry to help me think more strategically about the different components that go into effective transitions. I am hoping that this book will also help me find my own style of classroom management and improve my verbal and non-verbal management skills.


Two interns who were previously in PDS wrote this report. It goes through their inquiry process of pursuing the wondering: Using the perspective of both teachers and students, how can transitions be used in the most effective way to eliminate unproductive behavior and increase the amount of instructional time? Since this topic is closely related to mine, I can use this as a resource to discover what these interns learned about transitions in their own classrooms, which will help me with my inquiry as I try different strategies and begin to develop my claims. It also shows good examples of surveys that were given to students and teachers, which will help me develop my own.

This book talks about specific ways to promote student responsibility and motivation while managing your classroom. It takes a positive approach towards discipline and management techniques. Since maintaining a positive classroom environment and motivation is one of my goals, and I want to give students more ownership and responsibility over their transitioning, this book will be a useful source to have to give me ideas and strategies to try.


This article is about training students how to transition quickly and efficiently from one activity to another. It provides a breakdown of student and teacher responsibilities, as well as suggested strategies and techniques. This will be helpful for my inquiry because it is an in-depth article specifically about transitions that will provide me many good ideas, especially about how to teach students to take responsibility for themselves while transitioning quickly and staying on-task.


This book discusses discipline from a different point of view, challenging traditional assumptions about how to effectively manage classrooms. It focuses on student-centered management and building community instead of teacher-led conformity and obedience. This source will be useful throughout my inquiry because it will show me another perspective and belief about how to effectively manage classrooms. This information is especially relevant because one of my goals is to involve students throughout my inquiry process by holding class meetings, giving them surveys, and having them help me develop new strategies.

http://proquest.umi.com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/pqdweb/?index=…vtype=PQD&rqt=309&TS=1202598977&clientld=9874&cc=1&TS=1202598977%00%00

This article is about how children learn to handle transitions. It breaks up the day into different parts and provides suggestions for each type of transition that may occur throughout the school day. These include arrival, moving into large-group activities, moving into small-group activities, students who finish their work early, and moving students in and out of the classroom. This information will be helpful for my inquiry because one of my sub-wonderings is about using different transitions for different activities and parts of the day. This article will give me some good ideas and strategies to try with my class.


An intern who was previously in PDS wrote this report. It goes through her inquiry process of pursuing the wondering: What are a few effective transition techniques, and what are the effects of these techniques on classroom productivity? Since this topic is closely related to mine, I can use this as a resource to discover what this intern learned about transitions in her own classrooms, which will help me with my inquiry as I try different strategies and begin to develop my claims. The author also breaks down her research into different types of transitions and parts of the day, which is another aspect that I was interested in pursuing.
   This article contains a variety of suggestions to help students make the transition from finishing
   an activity to lining-up in a quick and organized fashion. It also provides ideas for difficult
   students, as well as fun ways to line-up and keep students’ on-task and attentive. The
   transition to lining-up in my classroom is one of my biggest problems and wastes a significant
   amount of time, so this article will be useful in giving me ideas to try.

   This book provides a comprehensive overview of classroom management techniques. This will
   give me good background information on all of the different aspects of managing a classroom-
   including laying a good foundation, and prevention and intervention strategies. I will use this
   book in my inquiry as a reference to different techniques I can try to transition successfully.
   Specifically, I think I will find the sections on teaching procedures and attention-getting useful.

http://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/profdev/profdev106.shtml
   This article contains ideas to help students clean up in a quick and organized fashion. The
   suggested strategies are also enjoyable for the children, which will help maintain students’
   attention and motivation. Since one of the transitional areas of concern in my classroom has to
   do with the time it takes to clean up, this article will be useful in giving me ideas to try with my
   students.

   This book is a comprehensive guide to children between the ages of 4 and 14. It is broken down
   by age and covers physical, social, emotional, language, and cognitive characteristics. It also
   makes suggestions for instruction, management, and activities based on what is appropriate for
   each age group. This will be helpful during my inquiry because it will help me learn where my
   seven, eight, and nine year old students are developmentally and what their needs are so that I
   can choose transitional strategies that will work for them.

Appendix B: Inquiry Brief

Context

My second grade class at Gray’s Woods Elementary School consists of twenty-three
students. Eleven students are female and twelve students are male.

Academically, the majority of my class is low achieving in most subjects. My students’
IQs range from 83 to 128, with an average score of 99. I have six students who receive Title One
services, five that receive IST services, and one who receives learning support who leaves the
classroom frequently. The reading levels of my students are also diverse. Eight students received
Jumpstart instruction at the beginning of the year and are working below grade level, four are in a
third-grade level independent reading literature circle, and the remaining students are more or less reading on grade level.

The students in this classroom are also diverse when it comes to behavior. As a whole, the class can be extremely talkative. They tend to socialize frequently throughout the day, especially during transitions. The students often need to be re-directed and kept on-task during these times. Approximately six students have attention issues and have a harder time than most focusing and staying on-task. Three of these students have been identified with ADD/ADHD, but none are on medication. Two students can display aggressive and argumentative behavior and provoke others, and one student tends to exhibit explosive emotional behavior at various times throughout the day.

Although we have attempted to create a positive classroom community, the interactions that occur during transitions have become increasingly negative, involving conflict and disrespectful behavior that is damaging to our learning environment.

Rationale

Elementary students engage in many important activities each day. A small but equally significant aspect of the school day is what happens in between these activities. Although they are a small part of the day, transitions are an extremely important element that can make or break the atmosphere and tone of the classroom and the school day. When they are not planned and quickly implemented, transitions can quickly become ineffective and a waste of time.

I am interested in pursuing better transition options because I have noticed that inefficient transitions are beginning to negatively affect our day. Although I began to take over transition responsibilities early in the school year, it is something that I still struggle with as a teacher. Since my students like to socialize and classroom management can be a problem for me, I tend to lose their motivation and attention during these parts of the day. It bothers me how much this small part of the day affects everything- the classroom climate, student motivation, energy level, and more. I have been wondering if things would be different in our classroom if our transitions were smoother and less chaotic. I would like to use this inquiry to answer these questions and find my own voice and style of classroom management that works for me.

Main Wondering

How can I learn to use efficient transitions to maximize students’ attention and motivation, to maintain a positive classroom environment, and reduce time off-task?

Sub-questions

Which transitions would be best for specific parts of the day (i.e., morning meeting/calendar, lining up, cleaning up, switching activities, dismissal, etc.)?

What are the specific times of the day/week and activities where my students are able to transition well?

What are the effects of allowing students to take ownership of transitioning?
How do the students with attention problems contribute to our unsuccessful transitions and how can I help them?

How can I use the positive role models in my class to improve transition time?

Data Collection Ideas

- Observation/field notes: my mentor and I will take notes on classroom activities and results of the strategies I try. The notes will include the length of time it took, the type of transition, the time of the day that it took place, and any student or teacher behavior that stand out.
- Timing transitions as baseline data and measuring change with each strategy that is tried afterwards.
- Surveying students about their thoughts on transitions and how they would rate themselves during these times, following a class meeting that discusses this idea.
- Follow-up interviews with specific students based on survey responses to deepen understanding of students’ perspectives of transitions in our classroom.
- Observing other teachers and their classroom management styles and techniques.
- Surveying other teachers about how transitions are used in their rooms and the strategies that work for them. Follow-up interviews may be a possibility depending on the information that I receive.
- Reflective journals about the success of attempted strategies and the progress that I am seeing in my classroom.

Timeline

February

- February 18th-22nd:
  - Collect baseline transition times and take observation notes
  - Observe other teachers (Lemont and Ferguson)
  - Develop student and teacher surveys
- February 25th-29th:
  - Have a class meeting with the students after a particularly difficult transition. Share how long it took them to switch activities, and talk about what a transition is. I will give them examples, and ask them how they feel about how our class acts during these times.
  - Give students self-assessment survey and compile results
  - Continue to time transitions and take observation notes
  - Research different transition strategies

March

- March 3rd-7th:
  - Distribute survey to teachers at Grays Woods on Monday- to be returned by Friday
  - Interview selected students as a follow-up to the self-assessment survey
  - Continue to research different transition strategies
  - Begin to implement new strategies
  - Continue to time transitions and take observation notes
• March 10th-14th (Spring Break):
  o Continue to research and plan for different transition strategies
  o Compile results from teacher surveys and student interviews
  o Organize data that has been collected so far
• March 17th-21st:
  o Implementation of different strategies
  o Continue to time transitions and take observation notes
  o Begin to analyze collected data and develop claims
  o Develop and give students a halfway point survey; compile results
• March 24th-28th:
  o Implementation of different strategies
  o Continue to time transitions and take observation notes
  o Continue analyzing data and begin writing paper

April
• March 31st-April 4th:
  o Implementation of different strategies
  o Continue to time transitions and take observation notes
  o Continue writing and revising paper
• April 7th-11th:
  o Implementation of different strategies
  o Continue to time transitions and take observation notes
  o Develop and give students final survey; compile results
  o Draft of paper due April 12th
• April 14th-18th:
  o Revise paper
  o Begin preparing for presentation
• April 21st-25th:
  o Finalize paper due April 23rd
  o Prepare for presentation on April 26th

Appendix C: Strategy List and Descriptions

Literature Suggested Strategies
• “Beat the Clock” - Starr (2004): The students have a set amount of time that they must complete a task within. A timer is set for that amount of time, and the students try to ‘beat the clock’ and finish before it goes off.
• “Counting Down” - Smith (2004): The teacher counts down from a number (I usually used 10), and the students have that amount of time to complete the transition.
• “ABC Song” - McHugh (2007): The students must complete the transition by the time the teacher finishes singing the ABC song.
• “Read Aloud” - McHugh (2007): The teacher reads aloud as the students get ready for dismissal. This keeps the noise level down and motivates them to go quickly so that they can hear the story.
• “Mini Break/Recharging Session” - McHugh (2007): The teacher does a quick activity that may involve music, movement, or stretching to give the students a chance to recharge themselves before the next activity begins.
• “Time Cues”- Buck (1999): The teacher gives students one or two minute warnings before they will be transitioning.
• “Physical/Nonverbal Cues” – Buck (1999): The teacher turns off the lights, plays music, uses sound signals, holds up her hand, does a certain movement, etc. to signal to students that it is time to transition.
• “PAT (Preferred Activity Time)”- Jones (2005): The teacher gives the students an amount of time to complete the transition. Time that is not used will be added to their ‘PAT’ that they can save up and use for an activity of their choice.
• “Line Games”- Shore (2004): While students are in line and waiting for others to join, play a game with them, have them follow your movements, or do another task like count by 2s or 5s down the line.
• “Mystery Item”- Starr (2004): During clean-up times, the teacher chooses a ‘mystery item’ that needs to be picked up. Whoever picks it up will win something or be given a special privilege.

Student Suggested Strategies
• Dismissal: Different groups do tasks in different orders (Ex. The class is split into three groups; the first group starts at the mailboxes, the second group starts at the backpacks, and the third puts up their chairs first; or two desk sets put up their chairs first, and two sets go to their mailboxes first.)
• Have a list of people to get the reading stations folders each day to save time.
• The students get to choose the amount of time they have to complete the transition.
• People who take a long time transitioning could owe the teacher time back.
• Earning whole-class rewards for good transitions (ex. group game, more recess, choice of fun math, science, reading activities, video, PJ party, lunch in the room or outside, drawing/coloring, SOAR, read aloud time, “special day”)
• Attention-getting ideas like “Ribbit” and “Freeze”.
• Clapping patterns

Teacher Suggested Strategies
• “Mystery Person”- The teacher chooses a ‘mystery person’ from a cup of popsicle sticks with the students’ names on them, then watches whoever’s name is on the stick. Since the students do not know whose name is on the stick, they all need to make sure they are doing what they need to do during transitions. If the person the teacher is watching did a nice job staying on-task, following directions and not talking to friends, they would be recognized and earn the class an extra minute of recess. When the student the teacher watches does not earn the class the extra time, she does not share who the person was. She simply informs the students that the person did not earn it for them, and that is motivation enough for them to encourage each other to try harder next time. This strategy is a way to hold the students accountable for their actions when they transition.
• Modeling- The teacher uses one or two students to model the desired behavior or transition routine.
• “Meet me on the carpet if…”- The teacher calls the students over by personal characteristics like gender, hair color, siblings’ names, birthdates, telephone numbers, types of shoes, letters in their names, clothing, lunch choice, etc.
• Switch the way you transition often.
• **Attention grabbers**- Using poems, songs, math stories to solve, team competitions for quietest line-up, etc., to get the students’ attention before they are required to transition.
• **Secret word of the day**- Students move whenever they hear the secret word of the day.
• **Keep it simple**: ex) Limit directions to three things.
• **Make it fun**: ex) Walk like a chicken back to your seat.
• **Nonverbal strategies**- Hand signals, body movement, etc.

**Appendix D: Examples of Observation Notes**

**D.1. BASELINE DATA**

Date: Monday, 2/18/08

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Type of Transition: Switching from outdoor recess to word study preview

Length of Transition: 4 minutes 40 seconds

Strategy Used: Word study books were on the students’ desks when they came back inside. I gave them instructions to put their things away from recess, sit down at their desks, turn to the correct page, and get their pencils out.

Additional Notes:
• Snow pants and boots needed to come off which took a long time
• T and P were the last students to get to their desks

Date: Monday, 2/18/08

Time: 11:40 a.m.

Type of Transition: Switching from science to lunch

Length of Transition: 8 minutes 40 seconds

Strategy Used: Students were working on their aquarium pictures independently and washed up by desk set, then sat back down to continue working. When all students were washed up they were called to get in line by the lunch they chose that day (packers, lunch 1, lunch 2, lunch 3).

Additional Notes:
• S and L were wandering around the room unaware of what they were supposed to do
• J was speaking loudly when others were working and did not follow directions

Date: Monday, 2/18/08
Time: 2:42 p.m.

Type of Transition: Switching activities from MVP sharing to dismissal

Length of Transition: 5 minutes 14 seconds

Strategy Used: Dismissed students to get ready to go home by kids who were sitting quietly and doing a good job paying attention during MVP sharing.

Additional Notes:
- Mrs. S was absent today
- Lots of chatter while preparing for dismissal
- Large crowd by the coats which made it difficult to move and get things

Date: Tuesday, 2/19/08

Time: 2:40 p.m.

Type of Transition: From afternoon work to dismissal

Length of Transition: 7 minutes 22 seconds

Strategy Used: “Raise your hands when the floor and on top of your desk is clear and then you may pack up and line up.”

Additional Notes:
- Mrs. S was absent today
- Crowds near mailboxes and coats are a problem
- Students moving slowly and talking

Date: Wednesday, 2/20/08

Time: 11:40 a.m.

Type of Transition: Switching from working on wetland mural to getting ready for lunch

Length of Transition: 7 minutes 11 seconds

Strategy Used: “When the timer goes off, start getting ready for lunch.” I purposely did not give specific directions to see what would happen and how long it would take.

Additional Notes:
- Very loud and chaotic
- Unorganized
- Felt stressful and rushed
Date: Tuesday, 2/26/08

Time: 2:40 p.m.

Type of Transition: Switching from science to getting ready for dismissal

Length of Transition: 10 minutes 50 seconds

Strategy Used: I told the students to pack up their things and meet me back on the carpet when they were finished. I gave positive comments to the students who got there quickly.

Additional Notes:
- After 6 minutes, 13 students were on the carpet and ready to go home
- S and L were the last to get to the carpet; they were wandering around again and not on-task.
- I held the first class meeting after this transition since it took a particularly long time.

D.2. POST-INTERVENTION DATA

Date: Wednesday, 2/27/08

Time: 2:45 p.m.

Type of Transition: Dismissal

Length of Transition: 3 minutes 25 seconds

Strategy Used: The class is split into three groups; the first group starts at the mailboxes, the second group starts at the backpacks, and the third puts up their chairs first.

Additional Notes:
- First transition after our class meeting. The students came up with the strategy and it was very successful.
- Seemed much more organized and better crowd control.

Date: Thursday, 2/28/08

Time: 11:06 a.m.

Type of Transition: Cleaning up from indoor recess and starting writer’s workshop

Length of Transition: 1 minute 43 seconds

Strategy Used: I told the students to work together to clean up and beat the timer that was set for 2 minutes. I made positive comments to students who were cleaning up quickly and helping their classmates.
Additional Notes:
  • All the students helped each other clean up and were very excited that they beat the timer.

Date: Friday, 2/29/08
Time: 10:50 a.m.
Type of Transition: Cleaning up from indoor recess and starting science
Length of Transition: 1 minute 50 seconds
Strategy Used: I told the students to work together to clean up and beat the timer that was set for 2 minutes. I made positive comments to students who were cleaning up quickly and helping their classmates.

Additional Notes:
  • There were 5 absent students today.
  • Using a lot of positive praise seems to help them move quicker.

Date: Friday, 2/29/08
Time: 1:50 p.m.
Type of Transition: Getting ready for home before library
Length of Transition: 3 minutes 6 seconds
Strategy Used: The students wanted to try having two sets put up their chairs first, and two sets go to their mailboxes first.

Additional Notes:
  • They love to choose their own strategy and the students try hard not to let down the person who selected it.

Date: Monday 3/3/08
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Type of Transition: Switching from morning work to calendar
Length of Transition: 37 seconds
Strategy Used: I gave the students a 1-minute warning and then counted down by ten. Everyone was on the carpet by the time I got to 2, so they earned 2 minutes of extra recess. I made a big deal out of it and praised the students who got to the carpet right away.

Additional Notes:
• Very positive reaction to the extra recess that was earned.

Date: Wednesday 3/5/08
Time: 9:20 a.m.
Type of Transition: Switching from calendar to reading stations
Length of Transition: 50 seconds
Strategy Used: The kids decided that we would set the timer for 40 seconds and try to beat it when we went to reading stations. I chose a student from each group to get the folders instead of waiting for volunteers (the students came up with this idea as well).

Additional Notes:
• Most groups made it in 40 seconds; only the red group was not ready.

Date: Thursday 3/6/08
Time: 10:55 a.m.
Type of Transition: Switching from writer’s workshop to washing up before music/lunch
Length of Transition: 3 minutes 40 seconds
Strategy Used: Students were working at their desks. I told them that I chose a mystery person stick from our cup that I would be watching during the transition and who could earn us extra recess if they did a nice job. Then I sent each set to wash up while the rest of the class worked. When they were finished they went back and continued working until everyone was ready.

Additional Notes:
• ‘Mystery person’ seems to work well; all students try their best so they can earn the class recess if it is their name on the stick. When I shared who it was that earned us extra recess, the class was very positive and thanked that person.
• The sets that were washing their hands got a little noisy but it quieted down after I praised the sets that were staying quiet and on-task.

Date: Tuesday 3/18/08
Time: 12:20 p.m.
Type of Transition: Coming back from lunch and beginning read aloud
Length of Transition: 35 seconds
Strategy Used: “Meet me on the carpet by the time I finish singing the ABC song.”
Additional Notes:
- The students almost made it (the song lasts 25 seconds); there were a few stragglers.
- They liked that it was a new way of transitioning that involved music.
- Made positive comments to the students who came over right away.

Date: Thursday 3/20/08
Time: 1:30 p.m.
Type of Transition: Switching from math to recess
Length of Transition: 2 minutes
Strategy Used: I gave a two-minute warning that we would be wrapping up math soon. Then I told them to "beat the timer": get cleaned up from math and be ready at your desks by the time the timer goes off in two minutes. I made positive comments to those who did it quickly.
Additional Notes:
- The students made it in exactly two minutes and were very focused as they cleaned up (less socializing).

Date: Tuesday 3/25/08
Time: 9:25 a.m.
Type of Transition: Switching from morning work to reading stations
Length of Transition: 1 minute 20 seconds
Strategy Used: I chose students from each group to get folders and gave them one minute to get to their station.
Additional Notes:
- The students were not able to make it in one-minute today- maybe modeling what this transition looks like and having them practice will help?
Date: Wednesday, 3/26/08

Time: 9:20 a.m.

Type of Transition: Switching from calendar to reading stations

Length of Transition: 54 seconds

Strategy Used: One student modeled for the class how to get ready for reading stations, and then the whole class tried it after I chose people to get the folders.

Additional Notes:
• This transition took significantly less time than the day before.
• The red group is always the last to be ready at their station. Why is this?

Date: Friday 3/28/08

Time: 1:30 p.m.

Type of Transition: Switching from math activities to getting ready for recess

Length of Transition: 3 minutes 15 seconds

Strategy Used: I told the students that I chose a stick and would be watching a mystery person to see if they cleaned up well and got seated right away.

Additional Notes:
• The mystery person did a great job, stayed on-task, helped other friends clean up, and sat down when she was finished, so she earned the class two extra minutes of recess. I shared this with the class and they were very appreciative and positive towards her for this.

Date: Monday 3/31/08

Time: 2:35

Type of Transition: Switching from recess to getting ready for home

Length of Transition: 2 minutes 50 seconds

Strategy Used: I had half the students go to their mailboxes first, and half put up their chairs first. Once all the chairs were put up, I started reading from James and the Giant Peach until we had to go down to the busses.

Additional Notes:
• One of our fastest dismissal transitions.
• Reading as they got ready to go home kept them quiet and motivated them to come to the carpet quicker.

Date: Wednesday 4/2/08

Time: 9:05 a.m.

Type of Transition: Switching from morning work to morning meeting

Length of Transition: 25 seconds

Strategy Used: “Meet me on the carpet in a circle by the time I finish singing the ABC song.”

Additional Notes:
• All students were able to make it to the carpet by the time the song was over and they earned an extra minute of recess. I made positive comments to the students who came over right away.
• This is a big improvement from before when I have tried this strategy.
• The students like this strategy and join in singing with me.

Date: Friday 4/4/08

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Type of Transition: Switching from morning meeting to reading stations

Length of Transition: 1 minute

Strategy Used: “Beat the timer”- I chose people to get the folders and I told them they needed to be seated by the time it went off.

Additional Notes:
• The students are always asking me if I can pick a stick when we transition and even during activities. They tell me that it helps keep them focused and working when they know they may be the mystery person.
• The students are needed less and less direction as they get used to my style and techniques of transitioning.

Appendix E: Transcript of Class Meeting (4/4/08)¹

Miss Allen: Before we go to library, I just wanted to have a discussion with all of you. Remember how we had that class meeting before about how we are when we switch activities? And we came up with ideas for how we can make it better, because we’ve been wasting a lot of time. I don’t

¹ All student names have been changed or abbreviated for the purpose of this inquiry paper.
know if you’ve been noticing, but since then I’ve been trying some new things, and I gave you that survey and interviewed some of you, and asked you what you thought about it and how we could make it better. So basically, what I would like to know is how you think our class is doing since we started talking about this. Are we getting better? Are we quicker? What do you think?

*Julia:* I think we’re doing better than we started because now, remember when you timed us and it only took a minute and 30 seconds to get our backpacks? We’ve gotten better at that.

*Jason:* I think we’ve gotten parts of it better, but some of the hard parts are cleaning up from recess, when you give two-minute warnings some people just keep playing.

*Miss Allen:* So there are some things that we still need to work on, which is fine because that is what this is about. I want to know what we still need to work on. What do you think we are really good at now?

*Brittany:* Getting our backpacks on quick and getting ready for home.

*Miss Allen:* I agree. I think that is something that we have really done well with. What else do you think Brian?

*Brian:* I think that we have gotten better at… we used to be kind of slow and would keep playing even with one or two-minute warnings but now we are better.

*Miss Allen:* So, does it help you when I make you aware of how much time we’re wasting, or when I point it out to you and say, “This is how long it took us”- does that help you think about getting faster and that you need to get started on your work. Does that help you realize it more? Whenever I point it out to you? Amanda, why do you think so?

*Amanda:* Because remember when you said we could get extra recess? I think that’s motivating people a little more when they see that. It’s motivating me.

*Miss Allen:* So that is something that is really working for you. What else is helping you?

*Lauren:* When we’re all on the carpet and you tell us we could earn extra recess, and we really want that extra time to play so we are like, “Okay let’s do this, we can be focused and we do it.”

*Morgan:* When you pull out a stick, I think that it makes me and all of the class behave, because if it’s them they need to be good so we can earn things.

*Miss Allen:* So I’m noticing you like when we get to earn things. I am noticing that pattern.

*James:* Well, I think we’re doing better at reading stations because we are all always focusing on the work and not fooling around.

*Miss Allen:* I agree. Here is my next question for you. Do you like being involved in the decisions that I make about how we will switch activities? When I say, “How should we do this? How much
time should I give you? What strategies should we try?” Do you think that helps you also? Do you like that? Does it help us get better?

Whole Class: Yes

Rich: Yes, because it kind of motivates us a little bit.

Miss Allen: Why does that motivate you? Me asking for your advice and having you choose?

Rich: Because we want to do well and excel, so we want to try our best, so when we hear something like that it motivates us.

Julia: Another thing that keeps us motivated is when you say our report cards are coming soon, then we’ll think we have to get working. Another thing that really helps is ‘Ribbit’, because it’s something to do with your hands when you put your hands up on your head, and it helps especially in the computer lab, because nobody can be on the computer because you have to stop what you are doing.

Miss Allen: So you like the things that help you stop and get your attention and get you focused. And they’re fun too. Do you prefer that I switch up the activities a lot, or would you rather me have them the same so that we can work on really getting good at one way. Raise your hand if you would rather me use the same way so we could really work on getting good at that one way of switching activities (counts 7 students). Raise your hand if you like it when I change it and use a lot of different ways to get us to change activities and go quicker (counts 10). Interesting, so some of you like it when I keep it the same and some of you like when I switch it. Good to know. So, if you had to grade our class for way back before we talked about this with the amount of time that we wasted from A to E, like when we grade ourselves sometimes, what grade would you give our class?

Amanda: If the grades went all the way down to Z- I would give us a Z- because usually we would waste so much time.

James: I would give us a C+

Jason: I would give us a D

Julia: We did pretty bad, so I would probably give us an E, because when we were getting our backpacks way back it took us a long time, because everyone was talking and it took 10 minutes, and we could’ve had that time for extra recess or extra time to work on things.

Miss Allen: So, if you had to give us a grade for right now… we are not done working on this we’re still working on this… but if you had to give our class a grade for right now, what would you give us?

Joey: A-

Brittany: A-
Ashley: Probably like a B+

Rachel: A C+

Miss Allen: So, since we are still not perfect what kinds of things can we do now from here?

Amanda: Maybe to help us get even faster, like if there is something extra that we didn’t finish and we really want to do, like something fun, like if we read James and the Giant Peach. If you went over to your backpacks quickly and you set the timer for 6 minutes and we were ready in 1 minute and 55 seconds, we could use the extra for recess.

Miss Allen: Would you always like extra recess or would you like a choice?

All students: A choice.

Miss Allen: So maybe we could start doing that, we could start voting on things you want to use that time for. We could use it for more read aloud time, we could use it for something else, we could use it for anything you want. This is a great conversation, and I’m glad you guys were so honest with me and helped me with this.
Appendix F: Teacher Surveys

Transitions Survey

Hello Grays Woods teachers! I know you are all very busy, but I would really appreciate it if you could take a few minutes to answer some questions about how you use transitions in your classroom. This will help me a great deal with my inquiry project on how to help students to transition more effectively and reduce time off-task. You can return them to me by putting them in Candy’s mailbox by this Friday (March 7th). Thank you!

-Katie Allen

1. What grade level/special do you teach?  
2. Typically, how long does it take for your students to transition from one activity to another?  
   a. Less than 1 minute  
   b. 1-2 minutes  
   c. 3-4 minutes  
   d. 5-6 minutes  
   e. 6-7 minutes  
   f. 7+ minutes

3. Are there specific times of the day that you notice are more difficult for students to transition? (i.e., morning, mid-morning, afternoon, end of day, etc.)
   afternoons, end of the day

4. Are there certain types of transitions that you notice are more difficult for students to transition? (i.e., switching activities, lining up, cleaning up, dismissal, etc.)
   switching activities, dismissed

5. What is/are your primary strategy/strategies for transitioning in your classroom?
   - specific directions, counting down, clapping, repeating
   - dismissing in small groups
   - making it fun (walk like a chicken back to you)

6. Do you notice certain students having an especially difficult time transitioning? If so, approximately how many?
Appendix G: Student Surveys and Results

Student Survey

The Morning
What grade would you give yourself for following directions when you come into the classroom in the morning? This includes choosing a lunch, handing in your homework folder, putting away your coat and bag, and getting started on work right away.

A  B  C  D  E

What grade would you give yourself for getting to the carpet quickly when I call you over for calendar or morning meeting?

A  B  C  D  E

In Between Activities
What grade would you give yourself for getting started on work right away after you are given directions?

A  B  C  D  E

What grade would you give yourself for following directions and not talking to friends when I ask you to do something quietly?

A  B  C  D  E

What grade would you give yourself for lining up at the door quietly and staying quiet until we leave the classroom?

A  B  C  D  E

What grade would you give yourself for cleaning up quickly when an activity is over?

A  B  C  D  E

The Afternoon
What grade would you give yourself for packing up your things and getting ready to go home at the end of the day?

A  B  C  D  E