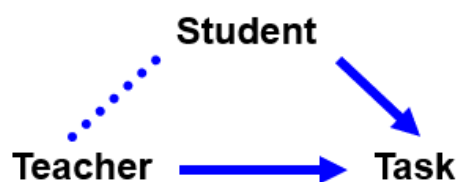


The Learning Triangle: A Model of Attachment & Learning by Heather Geddes



Connection-evading

"I don't expect you to care, so I want to do things on my own"

These students may appear quiet, self-reliant and reluctant to ask for help. They are sensitive to the teacher's proximity and find creative and open-ended tasks more difficult.

- Support independent work by setting clear goals and providing materials & resources.
- Build in choice - what steps to do first, what materials to use, who to work with, etc.
- Schedule time for concrete tasks - matching, sorting, categorising & building.
- Add structure to creative tasks - cloze procedure, mind maps, worked-out examples.
- Interact indirectly - praise the ideas/outcomes of work and deliver group feedback.
- Utilise older students or peers as buddies and mentors.

Worried about being forgotten, they struggle to focus on the task and need reassurance when working independently. Some may be perceived as bossy or domineering by their peers.

- Notice the student on a regular basis. Give reassuring commentaries about daily routines.
- Provide clear roles for group activities and responsibilities which help them feel valued.
- Break tasks down into small steps. Manage separations with timers & transitional objects.
- Keep the student in mind - *"I haven't forgotten about you. I'll be back in..."*.
- Reinforce persistence - *"It's frustrating to make a mistake, but you haven't given up"*.
- Play hide-and-seek, peek-a-boo and action songs with younger children.

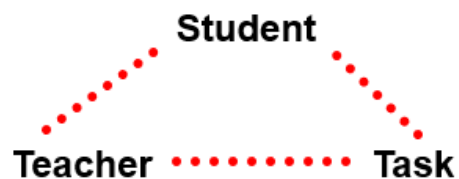


Connection-seeking

"I worry that you'll forget me, so I have to keep you involved"

These students show inconsistent patterns of approach & avoid and unpredictable behaviour, due to hypervigilance and high levels of stress. Fear of failure & appearing vulnerable are common.

- Prioritise safety - structure, predictability, warm & welcoming routines & regular check-ins.
- Schedule time for "flow activities" & provide a sensory diet to support emotional regulation.
- Low arousal for crises - simplify language, calm posture, diversions, access to a safe space.
- Teach skills and rules through play-based experiences, active modelling & Social Stories.
- Acceptance and empathy - *"I know you wanted to have another turn. It feels so unfair..."*.
- Communicate change in advance and help them anticipate & prepare for upcoming transitions.



Connection-distorting

"It's hard to feel safe, so I have to watch for danger and stay in control"