

TECHNOLOGY

What Football Can Teach Us About Time Management in the Classroom

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 GoGuardian Team



The start of the school year always coincides with the start of football season. While the two may not seem like they have much in

common at first, you'd be surprised how many skills they share. From discipline to learning game plans to [addressing mistakes](#) and then fixing those mistakes, the only real difference is that the Super Bowl can be more exciting than a history final exam! In this post, we'll talk about a skill that's crucial for both football players and kids: time management.

In a football game, certain plays take up more time than others. Sometimes, you want to stop the clock by going out of bounds, and other times you want to stay in bounds and bleed the clock. Just like with students in the classroom, football players learn these rules from a very young age. When they join the NFL, time management becomes second nature. So let's take a look at a few ways we can help our students prepare for the games ahead:

Start with Small Tasks

Start by teaching students to manage [small tasks](#), such as how to take a test. Look over the test first to check for the number of questions, the type of questions, and the points per question. These are all good ways to know what to tackle first. If a student knows that there is a long essay question at the very end, he/she will know to work quickly through the easier parts. Of course, it's always important to remind students to leave time to review their answers.

This last point is often ignored by students, so reviewing a test after it has been graded and handed back is a good activity to do with students. Just like in football, players watch film to see where they

missed a play or mismanaged the clock. This is a learning opportunity, and kids know when they've made a careless mistake versus one when they just didn't know the answer.

Prioritize with a Checklist

Once the kids have mastered the small tasks, it's time to move to bigger tasks. Checklists are a great way to guide a week-long project. Even as adults, we **prioritize** and set small milestones and deadlines for ourselves. For younger students, teachers will most likely need to help them figure out what is considered to be important and what is not. Every teacher has had students who thought that coloring and decorating the science fair board was more important than researching and doing experiments!

High school students generally have a good idea of what to prioritize, and they can create their own checklist of to-dos for a project. What older students need isn't direction, but motivation and a distraction-free environment.

Get Rid of Distractions

There are distractions everywhere on the internet: social media, streaming video, games, messenger, etc. As adults, we have the discipline and motivation to find a way to focus on work (coffee, music, absolute silence, shutting yourself in a room, etc.) Unfortunately, students don't always know how to get to that place.

It's helpful to do some activities beforehand to acclimate kids to a slower pace of thinking. Activities such as [reading](#) a paragraph, writing down answers by hand, or even a 20 minute [microscopy](#) session to look at some protozoa are things that require concentration, and the results are never instantaneous. From there, students should have an easier time staying focused on what they need to be doing. Of course, with technology, there are always ways to make sure that distractions stay out of the classroom, at least for the duration of the class.

How Technology Can Help

It's difficult to concentrate when you know that you can quietly log on to Facebook and check your messages. It's difficult for adults and it's definitely difficult for students, especially with their underdeveloped frontal lobes. This is where technology can help. Programs, like [GoGuardian Teacher](#), that block social media and streaming video sites are incredibly helpful at preventing students from being distracted as they work. The goal here isn't to demonize social media and all the internet fun that is out there. The goal is to teach students that the best way to manage their time is to know that there's a time and place for everything. Just like you would never call a time-out and leave Tom Brady with two minutes to make a comeback, social media should be enjoyed outside of the classroom.

Gearing Up for Sunday

Night/Monday Morning

With good time management practices set up in September, continue to practice them throughout the year. Like an NFL player, practicing catching the ball or throwing the ball is necessary in order to have a successful Sunday. For students, practicing looking over a test before they take it, creating a checklist, or turning off their phones before working, are all ways to manage their time better and create environments that foster success.

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