

APE VAULT

SEPTEMBER



Easy Adapted PE Exclusive Resource
Thank you for respecting the hard work that goes into creating quality educational resources

MONTHLY MAGAZINE

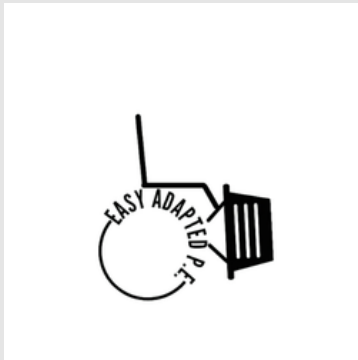
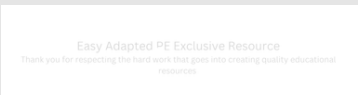
START STRONG

Supporting students, building routines, leading your team, and keeping September manageable.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Predictability as an instructional strategy
- Know the student before the skill
- Building better para partnerships
- Simple data that informs teaching



FROM SARAH

September Doesn't Have to Be Perfect

September can be exciting - and completely overwhelming.

New students. New schedules. New IEPs. New paraprofessionals. New classroom teams. New routines. And somehow, while we're figuring all of that out, we're also supposed to teach.

If you're feeling like you should already have everything running perfectly, change the goal.

September isn't about perfect lessons. It's about building the foundation that will make the rest of the year work.

Spend time learning how your students communicate. Figure out what motivates them. Teach your routines. Help students understand what happens next. Talk with the adults who support them.

You can assess, refine, and add complexity as the year goes on. For now, start strong.

THE SEPTEMBER BIG 5

- 1 Build predictable routines
- 2 Learn how students communicate
- 3 Identify motivators and support needs
- 4 Build relationships with your team
- 5 Collect useful - not excessive - data



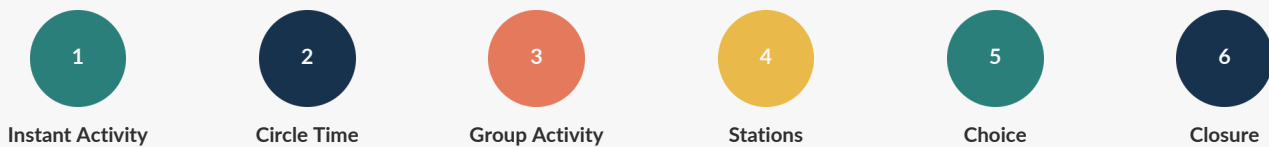
You don't need to have your entire year figured out during the first month.

Predictability Is an Instructional Strategy

For many students in Adapted PE, one of the most effective supports isn't another prompt ,reward system, or behavior intervention. It's simply knowing what happens next.

A predictable class structure can reduce uncertainty, decrease unnecessary verbal prompting, and help students participate more independently.

A SIMPLE, REPEATABLE STRUCTURE



TRY THIS

Instead of repeatedly telling a student, "First finish this, then we'll..." give them something they can see.

Use a whole-class schedule, first/then board, station sequence, or individual schedule - and gradually teach the student to reference it independently.

KNOW THE STUDENT BEFORE THE SKILL

- How do they communicate?
- How much processing time do they need?
- What motivates them?
- What prompting works?
- What affects participation?
- What does independence look like?

Sometimes what looks like a motor-performance problem is really an access, communication, or instructional problem.

You're Teaching Children - But You're Leading Adults, Too.

Building stronger partnerships with paraprofessionals in Adapted PE

We spend a lot of time preparing teachers to manage students. Far less attention is given to what happens when several adults walk into the gym with those students.

Paraeducators come with their own experiences, personalities, strengths, communication styles, and relationships with the students they support. Some have worked with a student for years. Others may have never participated in an Adapted PE class before.

And yet everyone is expected to immediately function as a team.

Strong partnerships don't happen automatically. They have to be built.



From Fuller & Lieberman (2024), JOPERD.

Managing children and leading adults are two different skills - and APE teachers have to do both.

START WITH THE RELATIONSHIP

Begin by getting to know the person working with you. Ask about their experience, what they already know about the student, what they're comfortable with, and how they prefer to receive feedback.

Clarify the Role

A strong relationship matters. Clear expectations make the partnership usable.

BEFORE CLASS

- Know the lesson
- Know student goals
- Ask when unclear
- Anticipate support

DURING CLASS

- Encourage participation
- Reinforce cues
- Allow processing time
- Support - do not overhelp
- Encourage peers

AFTER CLASS

- Share observations
- Celebrate progress
- Identify concerns
- Adjust next time

Our shared goal: help the student participate as independently as possible.

TRY THIS IN SEPTEMBER

The 5-Minute Para Partnership Conversation

1. What works especially well for this student?
2. What tends to make participation harder?
3. When do you think they need support?
4. When might we be helping too much?
5. What can I do to help you feel successful in PE?

NEW IN THE VAULT
Para Partnership Pack



MeetYour Para • Student Supports • Role Guide • Partnership Check-In

Your September Toolkit

01 September APE Survival Sheet

What to prioritize during the first month.

02 Visual Routine Tools

Schedules, first/then boards, and station visuals.

03 Getting to Know Your Student

Communication, motivators, supports, and independence.

04 Para Partnership Pack

Four tools for stronger adult collaboration.

05 Simple Data Tools

Collect enough information to make decisions without spending class time on a clipboard.

60-SECOND TEACHER TIP

Data Doesn't Have to Mean Everybody, Every Day

Pick a few students to intentionally monitor during each lesson. Everybody receives instruction, but everybody doesn't need formal data collected every class. Collect enough data to make good decisions - not so much that you stop teaching.



Explore September in the Vault

easyadaptedpe.com

START STRONG

September APE Survival Sheet

A one-page reminder of what matters most during the first month.

THIS MONTH, FOCUS ON

- ☐ Build a predictable class routine and explicitly teach it.
- ☐ Learn how each student communicates and how much processing time they need.
- ☐ Identify motivators, preferred activities, and meaningful choices.
- ☐ Teach transitions and equipment expectations before expecting independence.
- ☐ Build relationships with paraeducators and clarify their role in PE.
- ☐ Observe baseline performance without trying to assess everything at once.
- ☐ Choose one or two data points that will actually inform instruction.
- ☐ Notice what helps each student participate more independently.

SEPTEMBER REMINDER

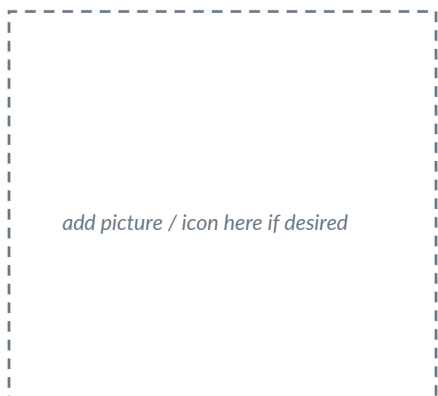
You do not need to have your entire year figured out in September. Build the foundation first. You can refine the program as you learn your students and your team.

PREDICTABLE ENVIRONMENTS

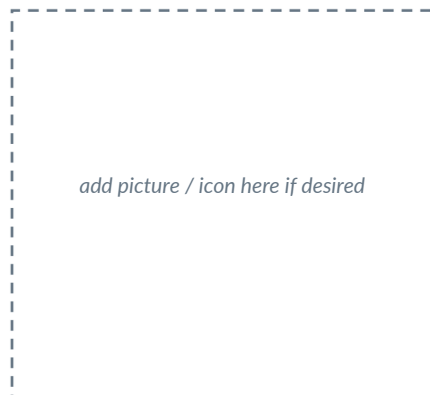
Whole-Class Visual Schedule

Cut, laminate, or display these cards. Use only the steps that fit your class.

INSTANT ACTIVITY



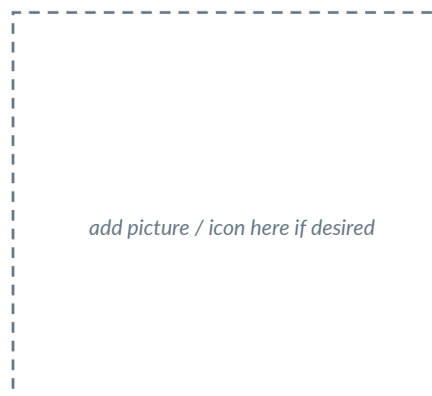
CIRCLE TIME



GROUP ACTIVITY



STATIONS



PREDICTABLE ENVIRONMENTS

Whole-Class Visual Schedule

Cut, laminate, or display these cards. Use only the steps that fit your class.

CHOICE TIME

add picture / icon here if desired

CLOSURE

add picture / icon here if desired

add picture / icon here if desired

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PREDICTABLE ENVIRONMENTS

First / Then Board

A simple support for clarifying what happens now and what comes next.

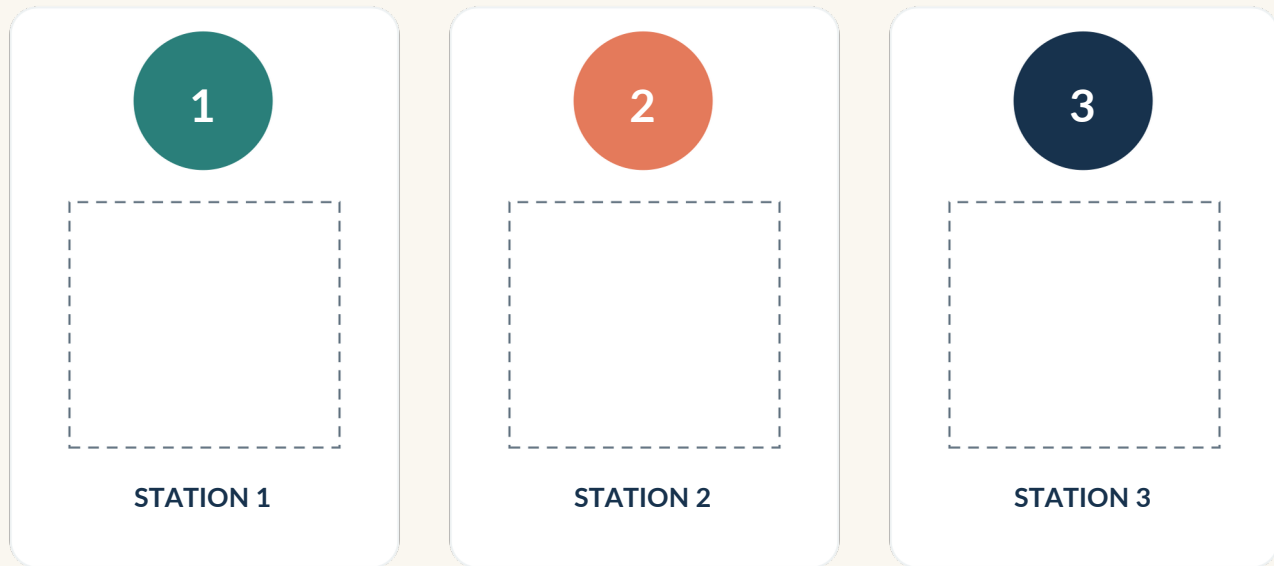
FIRST	THEN
<i>picture / word / activity</i>	<i>picture / word / activity</i>

Teacher tip: Gradually teach the student to check the board independently rather than relying on repeated adult verbal prompts.

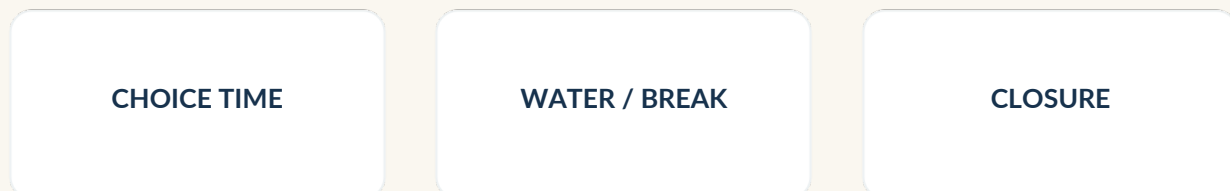
PREDICTABLE ENVIRONMENTS

Station Sequence

Use this as a 3-station rotation board or duplicate the idea for your own setup.



AFTER STATIONS



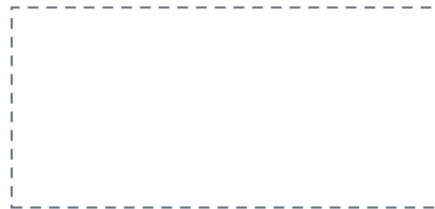
PREDICTABLE ENVIRONMENTS

Choice Board

Offer meaningful choices while keeping the number of options manageable.



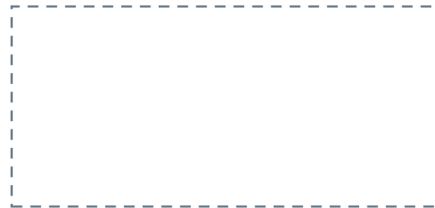
CHOICE 1



CHOICE 2



CHOICE 3



CHOICE 4

Keep choices concrete and visible. When possible, include activities the student can access with increasing independence.

KNOW THE STUDENT

Getting to Know Your APE Student

Use this early in the year with the classroom team, family, paraeducator, and your own observations.

Student name:

Grade / class:

Primary communication method(s):

COMMUNICATION & ACCESS

How does the student communicate wants, needs, yes/no, and finished?

How much processing time is typically helpful?

What type of directions or visual supports work best?

PARTICIPATION

What motivates this student?

What helps them engage or re-engage?

What tends to make participation harder?

KNOW THE STUDENT

Support Without Overhelping

Capture the strategies that increase access and independence.

Prompts/supports that work best:

What should we avoid or use cautiously?

Sensory or environmental considerations:

What does independence look like for this student in PE?

What would meaningful progress look like this month?

Anything else the team wants me to know?

Remember: A student may understand a motor skill but still need a different communication method, environment, demonstration, or amount of processing time to show it.

PARTNERSHIPS IN APE

Meet Your Para

A 5-minute partnership starter for building a respectful working relationship.

Name / preferred name:

Best way to communicate: Email Text In person Other

Experience working in PE / APE:

What do you feel most confident helping with?

What do you feel least confident helping with?

What helps you feel supported by a teacher?

How do you prefer to receive feedback or redirection?

One thing you are looking forward to this year:

PARTNERSHIPS IN APE

What Works for This Student?

Invite the paraeducator to share what they already know, then add your own observations over time.

Student name:

Paraeducator:

How does this student communicate?

What motivates them?

What helps them participate?

What tends to trigger frustration, withdrawal, or avoidance?

What prompts or supports work best?

What should we avoid?

What helps increase independence?

PARTNERSHIPS IN APE

Your Role in APE

Clear expectations help adults work together and help students become more independent.

BEFORE CLASS

- Know today's lesson and student goals
- Ask questions if anything is unclear
- Know where support may be needed
- Help prepare equipment when appropriate

DURING CLASS

- Encourage participation
- Reinforce the teacher's cues
- Allow processing time
- Support - do not overhelp
- Encourage peer interaction
- Share important observations

AFTER CLASS

- Share important information
- Celebrate progress
- Identify concerns
- Suggest what worked
- Decide what to adjust next time

OUR SHARED GOAL

Help the student participate as independently as possible.

PARTNERSHIPS IN APE

Para Partnership Check-In

Use after the first few weeks - or anytime the team needs a reset.

What is working well in PE right now?

Where is your role still unclear?

Where does the student still need support?

Where could we encourage more independence?

Is there something I can communicate more clearly?

What should we try or change next?

Professional foundation: Fuller, S., & Lieberman, L. (2024). Paraeducators in Physical Education: Communication Is Key. Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance, 95(4), 45-50.

MAKE DATA MANAGEABLE

Student Data Rotation Tracker

Everybody receives instruction. Everybody does not need formal data collected every class.

WEEK OF _____

Student	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu/Fri

Tip: Rotate your focus. You can still notice everyone, but choose a manageable number of students for intentional data collection each lesson.

MAKE DATA MANAGEABLE

Quick Skill Data Sheet

Use for trials, success criteria, or a single observable cue.

Student:

Date:

Skill / goal:

Success criteria:

TRIALS

Trial 1

+ - P

Trial 2

+ - P

Trial 3

+ - P

Trial 4

+ - P

Trial 5

+ - P

Trial 6

+ - P

Trial 7

+ - P

Trial 8

+ - P

Trial 9

+ - P

Trial 10

+ - P

What helped / what changed?

Next instructional step:

MAKE DATA MANAGEABLE

Prompt & Independence Tracker

Track the level of support, not just whether the task was completed.



Independent



Verbal / visual cue



Model / gesture



Physical support

Student:

Skill / routine:

Date	Activity	Prompt level	Notes

Look for a trend toward less adult support over time. Independence is often a more meaningful outcome than simple task completion.

MAKE DATA MANAGEABLE

60-Second Observation Note

A quick narrative tool when numbers do not tell the whole story.

Student / date / activity:

What did I observe?

What support was provided?

What helped participation or independence?

What should I try next time?

Collect enough information to make a decision. The purpose of data is to improve teaching - not to turn the teacher into a full-time recorder.

For a Google Docs version
of this Data tracker:
[Click Here](#)