Fading Academic Adjustments

Week 1

Pacing: Incorporate frequent eye, brain, & hydration breaks—taking 5 to 10 minutes to rest after every 20 to 30 minutes of reading or computer work in the classroom.

Strategic Rest Breaks: Schedule mid-morning & mid-afternoon 20-minute breaks in a secure & discrete spot at set times to help manage symptoms effectively.

Symptom Management: Prioritize keeping the student comfortable & able to participate in class—focus on maintaining well-being rather than pushing for high work output.

Maximize Academic Adjustments: Eliminate non-essential tasks & reduce semi-essential work to support the student's health and learning.

Increased Hydration & Caloric Intake: Ensure the student consumes more water & calories than usual, as the brain requires extra energy for healing & recovery post-injury. Proper nutrition & hydration supports cognitive function & overall recovery.

Week 2

Gradual Reintroduction: Start slowly increasing the student's workload as tolerated, taking small steps.

Ongoing Adjustments: Continue to eliminate most non-essential tasks & reduce semi-essential work, ensuring that make-up work doesn't accumulate.

Flexible Deadlines: Consider extending deadlines for essential tasks to accommodate the student's pace.

Modified Breaks: Maintain eye/brain breaks in class but gradually space them out as the student improves. Begin reducing "strategic rest breaks".

Symptom Management: Focus on consistent symptom improvement, track symptoms if necessary.

Prioritization: Keep prioritizing comprehension & learning over work output, & current assignments over make-up work.

Week 3 & 4

Ongoing Academic Adjustments: Continue to adjust academic expectations as the student progresses.

Workload Balance: Gradually reintroduce more tasks as the student heals, while continuing to reduce or remove non-essential work as needed.

Phased Reduction of Breaks: Gradually decrease the frequency of rest breaks as the student improves.

Focus on Comprehension: Maintain a strong emphasis on understanding & learning over simply completing tasks.

Prioritize Current Work: Focus on current assignments rather than trying to catch up on missed work. It's important to prioritize which make-up tasks are essential & ensure the workload remains manageable.

Monitor Symptom Improvement: Continue to ensure that symptoms are consistently resolving, tracking if necessary.

As cognitive inefficiency improves from week 1 to week 4, gradually reduce academic supports over this period without needing medical approval. If symptoms persist or the student struggles with increased academic demands by week 4, consult your LEA about initiating an evaluation. **Academic adjustments should not delay or deny the evaluation process.**

Arkansas Brain Injury School Support Program

Adapted from Getschooledonconsussions.com (2015 McAvoy & Egan-Johnson)

Returntoschool.org/ar