

Directions & Expectations

Key Questions

How do I set clear directions and expectations so that my classroom is consistently positive and focused?
How can I lead students to follow the directions and expectations the “right way, all the way”?

Underlying Principle and Beliefs

Students have to know **with certainty** what we expect of them, both academically and behaviorally, at all times. When they have this level of clarity, they are more likely to develop a deeper sense of autonomy, competency, and self-sufficiency. This is because they’ve been given boundaries and are able to work freely within them. Expectations that are clear and detailed lead to a reduction in distracting behaviors and, therefore, allow for deeper engagement in learning.

The absence of clearly stated expectations can quickly erode trust between the teacher and students. Behaviorally, students who are unsure what is expected of them but then are reprimanded become confused and frustrated. Academically, students who are unsure what success looks like can begin to feel like hard work is futile.

Students will inevitably miss the bar at times. Our first reaction should be to acknowledge that we may have been unclear and then to explain or show what we meant in a different way. If students continue to not meet expectations, we respond in a respectful, warm, firm manner. This means communicating four key messages: a) this is important, b) you can do it, c) I will help you develop the skill or knowledge you’re missing, and d) I won’t give up on you.¹

This focus area is aligned to MA II-B-1 - Safe Learning Environment.

Diagnostic Observation & Reflection

As the teacher is giving directions, you notice...

- the teacher continues giving directions when students haven’t completed the first part
- students begin working early
- students begin talking as the teacher is still talking

After the teacher sends students off to work, you notice...

- students ask, “What am I supposed to be doing?”
- students follow the directions incorrectly or not at all.

¹ Saphier et. al., *The Skillful Teacher*, p. 262.

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- the teacher gives multiple negative corrections.

Vision of Success

Teacher sets clear directions and expectations, including task, volume, and time, at the beginning of each activity so that students get to work “right away, all the way” without the need for the teacher to remind or redirect.²

Questions to elicit a compelling and aligned vision during the Focus Area Launch:

- ★ What does engagement look like to you when students are working independently?
- ★ How will you know students are engaged during group time?

Resources

High-Impact Instruction by Jim Knight

- Chapter 11 - Power With, Not Power Over
- Chapter 13 - Expectations
- Chapter 14 - Witness the Good
- Chapter 15 - Fluent Corrections

Match Minis

- [Giving Clear Directions](#)

Example Videos

- [WTD Montage - Trona Cenac](#)

The Skillful Teacher by Jon Saphier, Mary Ann

Haley-Speca, and Robert Gower

- Chapter 12 - Expectations

A Note on Language

Educators use the terms *directions* and *expectations* in a variety of ways. For the purposes of our coaching, we define *directions* as what students will do or the set of steps they will take and *expectations* as the manner in which a teacher expects his or her class to accomplish a task, no matter how small.

² Language adapted from KIPP NJ.

Notes for Coaches

The following notes for coaches comes from implementation of this focus area over the past few years:

- **Timing** - This focus area tends to happen during the first few months of the school year. When launching it, expect to spend multiple weeks on the *Clear Directions* action step. This is the heart of the focus area and a skill that we spend two full PD sessions diving into. Each bullet point within the criteria for success could be its own action step depending on the starting level of the teacher.
- **Sequence** - Teachers should be proficient at launching an activity before you tackle noticing and responding to students' behaviors. This progression can be tricky to navigate because all the skills occur within a 1-3 minute time period. Teachers often want to try to incorporate everything all at once.
- **Obstacles** - In the past, we have found that some teachers get stuck focusing on a handful of students who are still not responding to their directions and expectations. Our goal for this focus area is to get about 90-95% of the class following directions and meeting expectations consistently. Once that level has been reached, you can shift your coaching to address the remaining 5-10% by using the *Recurring Misbehaviors* action step. Do not jump to this action step until you have reached that 90-95% goal.
- **School-Wide Systems** - Make sure to learn the school-wide systems and consider them as you are choosing and launching action steps so that there isn't a disconnect between what's happening in the classroom and the rest of the school.

Action Steps

Launching an Activity

Rationale: The moment that a teacher launches an activity is critical. Students are more likely to follow directions and meet expectations if the teacher is clear and confident. Additionally, implementing a clean start with a timer creates urgency and normalizes jumping right into any given task.

- ★ **Full Attention.** Make sure you have the full attention of all students before beginning directions.
- ★ **Clear Directions.** State your directions clearly so that students know exactly what is expected of them.
- ★ **Check for Understanding.** For longer directions, check for students' understanding of what is expected of them.
- ★ **Clean Start.** Cue students when to begin the task.
- ★ **Countdown.** Use a countdown for most tasks that take less than one minute.
- ★ **Timer.** Use a [visible timer](#) for students to keep track of the time they have to complete a task. Give reminders to check the time.

Notice & Respond

Rationale: Even if a teacher states the directions clearly students will be looking to see if they actually mean what they say. Therefore, teachers should focus on noticing and responding to behavior consistently after the directions are given and throughout the duration of the activity.

- ★ **Lighthouse Scan.** Pause and get a clear picture about what is happening in the class.
- ★ **Reinforce.** Notice and acknowledge what students are doing well.
- ★ **Remind / Reset Expectations.** Implement an “in-the-moment reset” or remind students of expectations when multiple students are not meeting them.³
- ★ **Do It Again.** Hold to students meeting expectations fully and prompt students to ‘do it again’ until 100% is achieved.
- ★ **Redirect.** Address individuals or small groups of students who are not meeting expectations by using private, quick, positive techniques.
- ★ **School System.** Use your school’s system when responding to major misbehaviors.
- ★ **Repair.** Connect with students who struggled behaviorally in class earlier in the day or on the following previous day.

³ *Get Better Faster* language.

- ★ **Recurring Behaviors.** Identify recurring misbehaviors and create an individualized plan to address the problem.

Teacher Presence

Rationale: Students are most likely to follow the directions of adults who project a calm, confident, and warm demeanor. This presence looks different for each person but there are a few essential moves that benefit all teachers.

- ★ **Register.** Shift your register from casual to formal when giving directions and setting expectations.
- ★ **One Voice.** Reinforce the principle that only one person speaks at a time. Do not continue speaking or have a student continue speaking if there is an interruption.
- ★ **Delay Questions.** Delay students' questions until natural breaks in instruction or directions. Finish what you start.
- ★ **Do Not Engage.** Do not engage when students call out or come up to you at inappropriate times.
- ★ **Posture & Movement.** Communicate calm confidence through your body language.

Full Attention

Full Attention. Make sure you have the full attention of all students before beginning directions.

- ☐ Choose a consistent attention cue that is appropriate to the grade and activity.
- ☐ Any time you are about to address the class or give directions, use your cue.
- ☐ Use an attention cue to make sure all voices are off and eyes are on you before you begin any directions.
- ☐ Visibly scan after the attention cue looking from one side of the room to the other *and then* start giving directions.
- ☐ If students do not give their full attention on the first cue, redo it up to two more times without changing your tone or adding any additional language.

Adjustments & Extensions

- ☐ When first introducing the attention cue, state what students should be doing when they hear the cue.
- ☐ If students start to reach for the materials, immediately pause. Then, either say, "Who can remind me what we should be doing with our materials right now?" or "Not yet." Wait for students to put their attention on you.
- ☐ If using a countdown, start at 5 and count down at a normal pace, not slowing. You may add in reminders of the expectations in between numbers (e.g., "Voices off, eyes on me in 5, 4, eyes on me in 3, 2, 1.")

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- Model and practice repeatedly. This may require pausing the teacher several times for them to start again to use the attention cue and become comfortable with the countdown if used. This action step is the one that really makes teachers who hate role playing uncomfortable, so getting through this sets a solid foundation for the rest of the coaching cycle.
- Often teachers are scared to pause and scan, instead continuing to the directions while students are still talking. To prevent this, build in scaffolded practice with the coach acting as the students who don't stop talking. If you notice the teacher still not pausing to scan in class, consider using live coaching.

Additional Notes & Resources

- Attention cue suggestions by grade level:
 - ◆ Lower Elementary - Chime, call and response
 - ◆ Upper Elementary - Countdowns
 - ◆ Middle/High School - Countdowns
- A clapping pattern with a student response can be used as an attention cue but is often harder for first year teachers to do well. The teacher is requiring two things of the students - silent voices *and* clapping their hands. In middle and high school, this can exacerbate a power struggle. Clapping as a cue also does not work well when students have materials in hand.

Clear Directions

Clear Directions. State your directions clearly so that students know exactly what is expected of them.

Content Notes

- ☐ Plan directions and expectations for each part of the class. Script what you will say.
- ☐ State WHY the task is important.
- ☐ State WHAT you want them to do including task and/or product.
- ☐ State HOW you want them to accomplish this including materials, time, volume, movement, etc.

Delivery Notes

- ☐ Post longer directions in advance in an area visible to all students.
- ☐ Chunk longer directions into manageable parts.
- ☐ State the directions sequentially and number the steps using your fingers.
- ☐ Emphasize key words using changes in speed, volume, and pausing.
- ☐ Use a formal register to convey that your words are important.
- ☐ Keep it concise. Use the fewest words necessary to convey the directions.
- ☐ Model the steps using the items students will be using.
- ☐ Keep it positive. Show that you assume students will be successful using your tone and words.

Adjustments & Extensions

- ☐ **ES:** Post visuals of the materials they will need on the board.
- ☐ **Upper ES/MS/HS:** Add clarity by contrasting with what NOT to do (e.g., “You will walk, not run, to the bin.”)
- ☐ Add IF statements to preempt problems (e.g., “If your scale isn’t working, one member of your group will calmly bring up and pick up a new one.”)
- ☐ If you notice students struggling with volume, start the directions by naming and emphasizing the volume.

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- Plan the language of the directions and model the delivery prior to having teachers practice executing.
- During practice, act as a student and follow the exact directions that the teacher gives so that you both can work through the different kinks that need to be addressed before implementing in front of students.

Additional Notes & Resources

- Some coaches have found it helpful to use MVPT (Movement, Volume, Participation, Time) directions to reduce extraneous teacher talk. Example - “When I say, ‘Go,’ silently and carefully begin showing your work for #1 on your classwork. Go.”
- Reading Recommendation - Technique 52: What To Do, *Teach Like a Champion 3.0*, by Doug Lemov

Check for Understanding

Check for Understanding.

For longer directions, check for students' understanding of what is expected of them.

- ☐ Cold call on at least two students to repeat back all or part of the directions.
- ☐ For multi-step directions, ask students what they will do first, and then ask them to state what the next steps are in order before they begin the task.
 - **Lower ES:** Use more concise language (e.g., “__ what should we sound like when we walk to the carpet? __ what do we do with our chairs when we stand up?”)

Adjustments & Extensions

- ☐ Have a student model the direction for the class before beginning.

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- Plan the language of the directions and the questions that the teacher will use to check for understanding.
- The coach should then model it first prior to the teacher trying.
- Scaffold the practice:
 - ◆ Teacher simply states directions and asks the questions.
 - ◆ Coach acts as a student and answers *correctly*.
 - ◆ Coach acts as a student and answers *incorrectly*.

Additional Notes & Resources

- When using cold calling, ensure you have already taught the cold call procedure and do not use it as a “gotcha” moment.
- If you notice students are consistently not able to restate directions back, return to the basics of clear directions.

Clean Start

Clean Start. Cue students when to begin the task.

- ☐ Begin directions with “When I say (cue), you will...” Use the cue after the directions and check for understanding are completed.
- ☐ For longer directions, restate the key points as concisely as possible (e.g., “Pages 5-8. On your own. 4 minutes. Go.”)
- ☐ Set the timer (>1m) or begin the countdown (<1m) immediately after finishing the directions.

Adjustments & Extensions

- ☐ Use the timer as part of the cue (e.g., stand at timer, look at students, and say, “Ready? Go!” *start timer*)

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- Co-plan concise language that a teacher could use when restating the key points before the clean start.
- Practice delivering the directions, check for understanding, and clean start with a focus on appropriate pausing points.

Additional Notes & Resources

- We often find that teachers will allow students to begin before the cue word because they are excited that they are *doing* the action or task. However, it’s important that students wait until *all* directions are complete *and* the cue word has been said. As the coach, if you notice this happening, build in more practice around how to address students when they begin too early.

Countdown

Countdown. Use a countdown for most tasks that take less than one minute.

- ☐ Begin counting within 5 seconds of completing your directions.
- ☐ Don't drag out the last few seconds.
- ☐ Jump ahead if you forget where you were in the countdown (e.g., "7, 6, make sure you're there, 3, 2, 1.")
- ☐ Start the next part of the activity or directions immediately when the countdown ends.

Adjustments & Extensions

- ☐ **ES:** If noticing students are getting off task during countdown, invite students to count with you. Consider changing up the counting: Count up, count down, or skip count. "Count by 2's with me while you clean up your tools and join me on the carpet. Everyone should be on the carpet by the time we get to 40. Go. 2, 4, 6..."

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- Identify three quick tasks that the teacher asks of students repeatedly. Plan a real or pretend "next activity" so the teacher has a chance to practice transitioning quickly from the countdown.
- Scaffold the practice:
 - ◆ Teacher simply states directions with the countdown.
 - ◆ Coach acts as a student and moves *quickly*.
 - ◆ Coach acts as a student and moves *slowly*. Only include this practice component if the teacher has already integrated [redirection](#) or if you are including that as a second action step.

Additional Notes & Resources

- This is different from using a countdown as an attention cue. In this case, we are creating urgency around small tasks like taking out a textbook or turning toward a partner.

Timer

Timer. Use a [visible timer](#) for students to keep track of the time they have to complete a task. Give reminders to check the time.

- ☐ Use a timer for tasks that take more than one minute.
- ☐ State how long students will have for a task at the beginning.
- ☐ Set the timer immediately when they begin.
- ☐ Give positive updates in the form of “You have _ minutes left. You are on track if you have done _.” or “You should have completed _.”

Adjustments & Extensions

- ☐ If you need to give directions or a reminder before the time runs out, *pause* the timer so that students don’t try to keep working while you are talking.

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- Co-plan the amount of time the teacher will give for each task.
- Model giving the directions and then starting the timer.
- Scaffold the practice:
 - ◆ Teacher states the directions and starts the timer.
 - ◆ Teacher states the directions, starts the timer, circulates, and gives a positive update.

Additional Notes & Resources

- Allowing time to run out helps students to develop a stronger sense of time and reinforces time management.
- We recommend purchasing a large [digital](#) or [visual](#) timer for all teachers.

Lighthouse Scan

Lighthouse Scan. Pause and get a clear picture about what is happening in the class.

- ☐ Scan from a position where you can easily see everyone (e.g., corner or side of rows).
- ☐ Stand still and square up to the class.
- ☐ Use non-verbals actions to make it clear to students that you are watching for their follow-through—that you see and care if they do it.
- ☐ Continue scanning until all or almost all students or groups are on task.
- ☐ For longer tasks, consider telling students ahead of time that you’re going to watch them begin their work for __ minutes and then you’ll circulate and take questions.

Adjustments & Extensions

- ☐ Add a reminder cue for yourself (e.g., lighthouse picture on slide or post-it note on your computer).

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- If teachers have a hard time remembering to stay in one spot, mark a visible X on the floor on 1-2 spots from which the teacher should stop and scan. You can use painters tape so that it can easily be removed.

Additional Notes & Resources

- Many teachers simply forget to do this action step because they are in the habit of transitioning from one part of the lesson to the next quickly. If a teacher needs to work on habit formation, consider having them post a picture of a lighthouse in their slides or recruit a student to signal a reminder (older grades).
- Reading Recommendations
 - ◆ Technique 53: Radar and Be Seen Looking, *Teach Like a Champion 3.0*, by Doug Lemov

Reinforce	
Reinforce. Notice and acknowledge what students are doing well.	☐ Name the specific behaviors that students are doing well instead of telling what not to do. Mirror or match the language of your directions. ☐ Keep your language and wording sincere. ☐ Consider keeping some reinforcement private (e.g., whisper, thumbs up) depending on the age and reactions of students.
Adjustments & Extensions ☐ If your language is consistently skewing negative, try setting a goal of a 3-to-1 ratio by giving three positive acknowledgements before shifting to redirection. ☐ If students are asking to be noticed also, shift your language to more generalized reinforcements. Example: "I see more and more of us are sitting and listening, while a few of us are almost there." "A lot of us are remembering to raise our hand today to share their thoughts. Let's all practice it."	
Notes for the Coach	
Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions → Have teachers first state or plan their directions and then identify 2-3 behaviors <i>from the directions</i> that they will reinforce. As you practice, continue to have the teacher state the directions before reinforcing. This will allow them to get in the habit of reinforcing what they've stated in the directions.	
Additional Notes & Resources → Example - "Thanks for passing those papers quickly, [name]. [Group] is moving quickly but calmly."	

Remind / Reset Expectations

Remind / Reset

Expectations. Implement an “in-the-moment reset” or remind students of expectations when multiple students are not meeting them.⁴

- ☐ Notice when more than three students or more than one group are off task.
- ☐ Bring all students back using an attention cue.
- ☐ In a slow, firm voice, either...
 - state what your expectations are emphasizing or clarifying what you want to see when they go back to the task or
 - ask students to remind the class of the expectation/directions using language such as “Who can remind us...?, What can you do if...?”⁵
- ☐ Send them back to the task.
- ☐ Acknowledge improvement.

Adjustments & Extensions

- ☐ Based on what you notice in a previous section or class, give a whole group reminder of specific expectations you want them to focus on.

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- Identify the expectations for an upcoming lesson.
- Model resetting for one of the expectations (e.g., silently working), sending back, and acknowledging improvement
- Teacher practices all parts of the criteria for success for two more expectations.

Additional Notes & Resources

- Example - “Voices off and eyes on me in 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. You have _ minutes left. My expectations are that you are staying in your seats, only talking about the lesson. Go ahead and begin again.”

⁴ Get Better Faster language

⁵ Responsive Classroom language

Do It Again

Do it Again. Hold to students meeting expectations fully and prompt students to ‘do it again’ until 100% is achieved.

- ☐ When you notice students aren’t following directions 100% correctly, pause them using “assume the best” language (e.g., “Oops, my directions were unclear.”)
- ☐ Restate directions or expectations clearly with emphasis on the missed pieces.
- ☐ Check for understanding by having students repeat or model
- ☐ Have whole class redo the task
- ☐ If students do not fully follow expectations, say: “Stop. Go back. [State what to do that they missed. Do it again.” (e.g., “Stop. Go back. *With walking feet*. Do it again.”)
- ☐ Give positive feedback to the class when they fix it (e.g., “Great job using walking feet.”)

Adjustments & Extensions

- ☐ If a couple students do not fully follow directions individually, have them stop, go back and do it again.
- ☐ If a couple students *consistently* do not follow directions during a “do it again” moment, have a conversation with them at another time and have them “do it again” at another time. Do *not* have the entire class continue to redo the directions.

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- Choose a short task that students are often not doing 100% correctly.
- Model doing all the steps in the criteria for success for the task.
- Scaffold the practice:
 - ◆ Teacher practices the same steps with the same task.
 - ◆ Teacher practices for a new short task that students are often not doing 100% correctly.

Additional Notes & Resources

- This action step is best used for quick tasks (e.g., picking up materials) whereas [Remind / Reset Expectations](#) is best used for longer tasks (e.g., working on a lab).
- Keep an eye on the teacher’s tone especially with the “Stop. Go back.” section. We’re looking for warm and firm, not too playful and not too strict.
- Some teachers get caught in the trap of “doing it again” over and over again while watching students’ behavior get progressively worse. If you suspect that this might occur, discuss when the teacher should move on and figure out how to address the incorrect implementation at another time.
- Reading Recommendations
 - ◆ Technique 51: Do It Again, *Teach Like a Champion 3.0*, by Doug Lemov

Redirect

Redirect. Address individuals or small groups of students who are not meeting expectations by using private, quick, positive techniques.

- ☐ Notice when individual students or small groups are off task. Catch it early.
Strategies (choose 1-2 to focus on)
- ☐ Non-Verbal - Use a hand gesture or intentional modeling of the corrective action (e.g., hand down, eyes direction). Do *not* stop the flow of instruction.
- ☐ Positive Group Correction - Use a quick verbal reminder for the whole group with the action you want them to take (e.g., "Make sure your pencil is moving.")
- ☐ Anonymous Individual Correction - Describe the solution and make it explicit that there are people who have not yet met the expectation (e.g., "Just waiting on two more teammates to track the speaker.")
- ☐ Private Individual Correction - Give the class a task so that you're able to redirect a student privately. Ask if the student is okay (often this is enough). Restate what you want to see, focusing on purpose over power.
- ☐ Lightning Quick Public Correction - Clearly state students' names. Using a calm firm tone, concisely state what they should be doing (e.g., "[Name], turn to your partner.")

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- When practicing non-verbal cues, take the time to create a bank of go-to nonverbals that the teacher may use. Then practice these in quick succession with different scenarios.
- For those teachers who get caught up in having all students meeting expectations before presenting the next assignment, tell them to aim for 90% and encourage them to get the work in front of students.

Additional Notes & Resources

- Make sure when presenting this action step, we teach how to distinguish between minor disruptive/minor non-disruptive/major/extreme misbehaviors. Catch it early does not mean verbally doing something in the moment.
- This is most likely a multi-week action step.
- Always reminding the teacher that we always want to state the desired behavior vs. undesired (i.e. instead of "You didn't get directions yet.." try "Stop. Wait to hear the directions." Instead of "You shouldn't be talking right now" try "It's time to listen."⁶
- Reading Recommendations
 - ◆ Technique 55: Least Invasive Intervention, *Teach Like a Champion 3.0*, by Doug Lemov

⁶ Responsive Classroom

School System

School System. Use your school's system when responding to major misbehaviors.

- ☐ Seek out the school's consequence ladder or other system for addressing major misbehaviors.
- ☐ Identify behaviors you might see that require more than a redirection.
- ☐ Plan the response and/or consequence to each of the most common 5 major misbehaviors.
- ☐ Message any changes to students during the next class period.
- ☐ Follow through on assigning consequences consistently.

Adjustments & Extensions

- Shot Across the Bow - Give students a clear warning that if they continue the misbehavior it will lead to a consequence. "(name), this is your warning. If you continue (behavior), then you will (consequence)."

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- Either have the teacher review the consequence ladder prior to the meeting or review it with them during the first part of your meeting.
- Identify the common misbehaviors that would require a "school system" response and plan out how the teacher will respond to each.
- Model how to both message changes and how you will respond to the common major misbehaviors you planned for.
- Scaffold the practice:
 - ◆ Coach acts as student and tells the teacher which misbehavior they will be acting out. Teacher addresses the misbehavior and assigns the consequence.
 - ◆ Coach acts as student but does *not* tell the teacher which misbehavior they are about to act out. Teacher addresses the misbehavior and assigns the consequence.

Additional Notes & Resources

- There may be times when the teacher philosophically disagrees with the systems that are in place at the school. At these times, seek to understand their perspective and share the rationale for the school's system. A teacher who does not feel heard in this case will be less likely to follow through on the systems.
- *Shot across the bow* should only be used if consequences come after repeated misbehavior. If a misbehavior earns a consequence on the first instance, the teacher should not use *shot across the bow* in the way described above.

Repair

Repair. Connect with students who struggled behaviorally in class earlier in the day or on the previous day.

- ☐ Seek out the student at lunch/recess/during transition to aim for repair when all parties have calmed down
- ☐ Find a semi-private location in which to talk.
- ☐ State that it was a difficult class for them and for you and you want them to feel more successful
- ☐ Ask them what you can do together to make things go better next time
- ☐ When possible, do the things they've suggested
- ☐ If the student is not open to the conversation, don't force it.

Adjustments & Extensions

- If you are struggling to build a productive relationship with a specific student, seek out a teacher/staff member who has a stronger relationship with that specific student to get guidance on the best approach.

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- Work with the teacher to identify times when they can repair.
- Plan the language that they will use with the student. This language might vary by student so create a few scripts if necessary.
- Model how to lead the repair using the scripts you created.
- Scaffold the practice:
 - ◆ Coach acts like a student who is calm and receptive to the repair.
 - ◆ Coach acts like a student who is calm but hesitant to repair.
 - ◆ Coach acts like a student who is calm but not responsive to repair.
 - ◆ Coach acts like a student who is not calm.

Recurring Behaviors

Recurring Behaviors.

Identify recurring misbehaviors and create an individualized plan to address the problem.

Gather Data

- ☐ Gather data on the timing, location, and frequency of student behavior by filming your class or asking another teacher to take literal notes.
- ☐ Ask another teacher about strategies that have worked with individual students.

[Student Problem-Solving Protocol](#)⁷

- ☐ Describe the behaviors that you are noticing objectively
- ☐ Talk about the student's feelings and needs
- ☐ Talk about your feelings and needs
- ☐ Brainstorm together to find a mutually agreeable solution
- ☐ Write down all ideas--without evaluating
- ☐ Decide which suggestions you like, which you don't like, and which you plan to follow through on.

Adjustments & Extensions

- ☐ If the misbehaviors continue without noted improvement, schedule a meeting with the student's caregiver(s).

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- Create a way for the teacher to gather data and connect them with another teacher through email or in person if they are newer to the school.
- If trying the Problem-Solving Protocol first, use the linked planning document and co-plan the conversation with the teacher.

Additional Notes & Resources

- Do not do both "Gather Data" and "Student Problem-Solving Protocol" at the same time. Choose one approach to take with the teacher first and then attempt the other if the first approach is not successful.

⁷ Adapted from *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk*.

Register

Register. Shift your register from casual to formal when giving directions and setting expectations.

- ☐ Use a *casual* register when instructing.
- ☐ Use a *formal* register when giving directions.
- ☐ Noticeably shift register as you begin directions by...
 - speaking clearly, slowly
 - articulating syllables and words
 - standing straight
 - clasping hands or using simple, controlled hand gestures
 - maintaining steady eye contact

Adjustments & Extensions

- ☐ Voice record and listen to yourself for a 10 minute period. Reflect on your register.

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- Identify times in the lesson when the teacher will shift from a *casual* to *formal* register and vice versa.
- Model how to shift between registers.
- Scaffold the practice:
 - ◆ Teacher delivers parts of a lesson shifting from casual to formal at planned times.
 - ◆ Coach acts as a student exhibiting misbehaviors. Teacher shifts from casual to formal when redirecting each time.
- For some people, it can be hard to hear the change in their own register. It can help to video or audio record the practice and play it back so they can hear themselves.

Additional Notes & Resources

- Use a casual register when...
 - ◆ welcoming students (e.g., "Good morning, [name]. Great to see you!")
 - ◆ reinforcing behaviors (e.g., "[Name], thanks for getting right to work.")
- Use a formal register when...
 - ◆ reminding students of expectations (e.g., "Remember to put your bags on the backs of your chairs.")
 - ◆ redirecting behaviors (e.g., "[Name], head back to your seat. We're working on the warm up. You can explore the library later.")

One Voice

One Voice. Reinforce the principle that only one person speaks at a time. Do not continue speaking or have a student continue speaking if there is an interruption.

- ☐ Interrupt yourself mid-word or mid-sentence with a quick, dramatic pause when additional voices or sounds are heard. Then continue on with the original directions.
- ☐ Increase the frequency of your attention cues. Use these before correcting.
- ☐ Get quieter and slow down when you are giving directions so students have to be quiet to hear.
- ☐ Pause students if they start while directions are still being given.
- ☐ When students are talking over their peers, say, "Pause, wait until you have everyone's attention." Then, once all students are silent, say, "Go ahead."

Adjustments & Extensions

- ☐ Once you've built a strong classroom culture, you can teach students to also pause when someone is talking while they are talking and teach them strategies for gaining respect.

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- Model how to self interrupt with the teacher acting as the student.
- Scaffold the practice:
 - ◆ Teacher practices self interrupting while giving directions.
 - ◆ Coach acts as a student talking while the teacher is giving directions. Teacher self interrupts and the coach stops talking immediately.
 - ◆ Coach continues to act as a student and the teacher tries the other techniques - attention cue, get quieter and slower. Coach responds positively each time.
 - ◆ Coach acts as a student and does not respond to teacher's self-interrupt or attention cue.

Additional Notes & Resources

- Only keep 2-3 of the criteria for success when setting this as a weeklong action step. For example, you might just have a teacher try self interrupting and then speaking more quietly and slowly one week. Then you might have them try increasing the frequency of the attention cue the next.
- Reading Recommendations
 - ◆ Technique 58: Strong Voice, *Teach Like a Champion 3.0*, by Doug Lemov

Delay Questions

Delay Questions. Delay students' questions until natural breaks in instruction or directions. Finish what you start.

- ☐ When starting directions, name when you'll take questions (e.g., "I'll take questions after I've explained all parts of this assignment.")
- ☐ Use nonverbals to redirect hands/requests/questions (e.g., finger up for "one minute")
- ☐ Use quick verbal reminders of when you'll take questions (e.g., "Remember, I'll be able to answer questions in 2 minutes.")
- ☐ Make sure to follow up by always allowing time for questions, especially when the directions are longer.

Adjustments & Extensions

- ☐ If a student asks questions at the appropriate time but the questions are unrelated to the lesson or task, tell them when they can talk to you about the question (e.g., "I'd be happy to talk about that during independent practice/lunch/recess.")
- ☐ If one student consistently has questions they want answered immediately, create a system for them to write down their questions without interrupting the directions.
- ☐ If you have trouble remembering to follow up with students, create a system for writing down their names and when you will follow up on their questions.

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- Choose an upcoming set of long directions to practice. Plan the directions first so the teacher is confident in what they will be saying.
- Model between each scaffold below. This will allow the teacher to see how to address each type of interruption.
- Scaffold the practice:
 - ◆ Teacher states the directions with the language of when they will take questions.
 - ◆ Coach acts like a student with a hand up while the teacher is talking. Teacher uses a nonverbal to redirect the student.
 - ◆ Coach acts like a student who calls out. Teacher either uses reminder language or a nonverbal.
 - ◆ If there are specific tricky scenarios that are happening in class, role play those scenarios.

Additional Notes & Resources

- You may consider creating a routine for when questions can/cannot be asked throughout the day (e.g., a stuffed animal on the desk indicates that it is *not* an appropriate time for questions).

Do Not Engage

Do Not Engage. Do not engage when students call out or come up to you at inappropriate times.

- ☐ If a student comes up to you, use a nonverbal hand motion and/or say, “Please go sit down.”
- ☐ Immediately giving your attention back to the student you’re working with.
- ☐ If a student calls out, either ignore or say, “Silent hand, please.”
- ☐ Respond to the student when they have followed the directions appropriately (e.g., seated with hand raised) *and* you have finished what you were doing (e.g., finishing up helping two students who raise their hands and have been waiting).

Adjustments & Extensions

- ☐ **MS/HS:** If students are calling out during silent work, consider simply ignoring the call out. This will only work if other students do not respond to the call out.
- ☐ Create a “What to do if I have questions” anchor chart and point to it while redirecting students who call out.
- ☐ When you notice that *any talking* is prompting a student to continue not meeting expectations, consider purposefully not responding to the student until they do the expected behavior.

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- Choose either a set of directions the teacher will be giving in an upcoming lesson or a work time. We recommend choosing the scenario in which the teacher is struggling the most with students calling out or coming up to them.
- Ask the teacher to be the student and give them specific behaviors to act out (e.g., calling out or walking up to the teacher). Model how to respond to each behavior.
- Scaffold the practice:
 - ◆ Teacher delivers a part of the previous lesson. Coach acts as a student walking up to the teacher mid-lesson. Teacher practices using a nonverbal hand motion and then verbal redirection.
 - ◆ Discuss which would work better.
 - ◆ Teacher delivers a part of the previous lesson. Coach acts as a student calling out. Teacher practices ignoring, then using a verbal redirection.
 - ◆ Discuss which would work better.
 - ◆ Combine the two previous scenarios. Teacher delivers part of the lesson. Coach acts like a student and either walks up or calls out. Follows the teacher's redirection each time.
 - ◆ Continue with the same scenario but now the coach (as student) does *not* follow the redirection the first time. Work together to plan and practice an effective response. Add it to the CFS.

Additional Notes & Resources

- Before tackling this action step, discuss with the teacher whether this is a classwide issue or limited to

individual students. If it's classwide, co-plan messaging around how the teacher will no longer be taking questions that are called out. If individual, the teacher can likely just start implementing the action step without messaging or just messaging in a one-on-one conversation with the student.

Posture & Movement

Posture & Movement.

Communicate calm confidence through your body language.

- ☐ Keep your shoulders back and arms and legs uncrossed. Stand still and face the entire class, especially when giving directions.
- ☐ Either keep hands still or move them deliberately to highlight key points, especially when giving directions.
- ☐ When using proximity or responding to a student, walk calmly and slowly instead of rushing over. (If the problem is urgent, address it publicly.)

Adjustments & Extensions

- ☐ If safety is not a concern, walk along a slightly longer pathway to the student to convey that you are calm and unfazed by their behavior.

Notes for the Coach

Practice & Co-Planning Suggestions

- Model posture, hand movement / position, and walking toward a student in a slightly exaggerated way.
- Keep it light and a bit silly because this action step can feel particularly awkward for teachers.
- As you practice, keep asking the teacher, “Does this feel comfortable? Would you actually stand / walk like that?” If they seem even a bit hesitant, try other ways and ask the same questions. Our goal is to practice posture and movement that is effective but also comfortable for the teacher.
- Scaffold the practice:
 - ◆ Teacher stands with strong posture and hands in a comfortable position.
 - ◆ Teacher states directions for part of an upcoming lesson using calm, confident posture and movement.
 - ◆ Coach acts like a student who is off task. Teacher practices walking calm
 - ◆ Teacher leads part of a lesson *and* the coach acts like a student who is talking at the same time. Teacher practices all skills together.

Additional Notes & Resources

- Discussing a teacher’s posture and way they move their body can feel very personal. We’ve found it helpful to share how we had to adjust our own posture and movement in our first years of teaching.