

Take A Break

Why should I do it:

- To provide students with a cool down time
- To allow students time away from a stressful or potentially stressful situation
- It can help avoid a power struggle between you and the student
- Can help students to “reset” and return to a task fresh
- Takes student’s mind off what may be hindering them
- Helps break up monotonous tasks, assignments, activities, etc
- Provides a class system for teachers to address students indirectly without having to stop instruction to speak with a student at that moment

When should I do it:

- When a student gets off task and is beginning to be disruptive but not problematic
- When student is beginning to be argumentative or confrontational
- When a student is refusing to follow a directive
- When you are aware of an ADD/ADHD diagnosis
- When student seems fidgety, moves a lot, cannot sit still
- When student is becoming frustrated or agitated with the task at hand
- When two or more students are engaged in conflict, argument, or are just getting annoyed with one another
- When a student seems to be getting bored, sleepy, or their eyes are glazing over
- When a student’s emotions and/or behaviors need to be deescalated

How do I do it:

- Make a laminated card with the word “BREAK” on it and keep it in a spot where all students can access it
- Provide student with hand held timer setting the timer for no longer than five minutes (or keep timer in the break location)
- Identify a safe and non-disruptive area to go (by or in office works)
- Student returns when timer goes off
- Thank the student for leaving and returning so cooperatively. Give encouragement to student upon return.
- Explain the process to the student(s) or class and have them practice it before implementation
- Either the student or teacher may initiate a break, though it is best when the students can identify the need for and take breaks appropriately

- If the students abuses the break card intervention, set limits on the frequency of use to deter this

Alternative Methods:

- Breaks may be less formal and simply involve getting a snack
- Breaks may be as simple as a student moving to another spot in the classroom
- Breaks may include sending a student on an errand, taking a note or paper to another teacher or the office, or some other task that gets the student up and out for a short break