

Exit Routines

Exit Routines Defined

An exit routine is a classroom management strategy that is clearly explained, modeled, practiced, and implemented at the end of each instructional day. Its design and purpose are to help students complete final classroom tasks in an organized fashion, and smoothly transition outside of the classroom.

5 in the Last 5

Background:

5 in the Last 5 is a classroom management strategy that provides students with specific and manageable steps in ending instruction for the day and exiting the classroom.

Benefits

5 in the Last 5 provides students with clear and visible expectations, as well as a simple process for satisfying such expectations. When effectively implemented, the strategy can also help in minimizing classroom disruptions and/or off-task behavior as students prepare to exit the classroom.

5 in the Last 5

1. Submit work.
2. Return classroom materials to designated area.
3. Clean area around desk/table.
4. Place belongings in backpack/bag.
5. Sit quietly and await exiting instructions.

Process:

1. Brainstorm and record 5 tasks students should complete within the last 5 minutes of class.
2. Before introducing and modeling your classroom *5 in the Last 5* for students, create an anchor chart that includes simple instructions for completing each task. You might consider including visual representations or a visual cue for each task.
3. Post the anchor chart in an accessible area for quick reference—both for yourself and your students. You might consider posting the anchor chart near the *5 in the*

First 5 anchor chart to ensure that students have immediate access to and understand expectations for both entering and exiting the classroom.

4. Plan time to explain, model, and practice your classroom *5 in the Last 5*. As always, consistency and reinforcement are key!

Helpful Tips:

- Set and project a digital timer to create a sense of urgency and ensure a smooth transition from the *first 5 in the Last 5* task to the time students are instructed to exit the classroom.
- Make sure classroom items such as assignment bins and trash cans are strategically placed throughout the classroom. Strategic placement of these items will allow for smoother transitions as students complete exit routines.

Exiting the Classroom

Background:

Implementing a two-minute dismissal procedure ensures the classroom is tidy, orderly, and ready-to-go for the next group of students. This procedure also prevents students from disregarding the teacher and swiftly exiting out the door the morning the bell rings. A dismissal system prepares and allows students out of class in positive cohesive fashion.

Benefits:

It sets the tone to the class that the teacher dismisses the class; not the bell. This procedure curtails the following issues:

1. Instructional time not being maximized.
2. Students congregating at the exit waiting for dismissal.
3. A classroom in disarray.

Scenario: The entire class is working away, time swiftly slips by, and suddenly the dismissal bell rings. Students start scurrying. The teacher is blindsided. Before the

teacher has a chance to say something, one student is dashing out of the door and the other soon follows. The teacher weakly releases the remainder of the class. They grab their personal belongings and exit, leaving the teacher with a big mess and a small allotment of time to prep for the incoming class.

The Process/Suggested Use:

Introduce your exit system on the first day of school, so students can start to follow the procedure upon exiting at the end of class. Make certain that an anchor chart is visibly displayed within your classroom that delineates your expectations for exiting the learning environment.

Helpful Tips:

- **Coach** the students on a simple exit procedure.
- **Practice** with students during the final two minutes of the class period.
- **Support** students in knowing the premise of the dismissal process so they can understand why it's important to maintain a safe and organized environment.
- Consider implementing a daily closing message to bring closure to the class prior the dismissal. The primary purpose of this is to review what has been accomplished for the day.

Reference

Lemov, D. (2010). Teach Like a Champion. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.