

# Breaks

## 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
- Helps students with poor attention and focus
- Gives kids that need sensory input
- Gives fidgety kids and those who have trouble sitting still for periods an opportunity to get up and move

## 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 a student is excessively fidgety or moving around a lot in their seats
- When a student has significant ADD/ADHD
- When a student needs the sensory input
- When a student seems to have lost focus and attention
- When a student needs help redirecting or refocusing
- When a student seems sleepy, bored, tired, etc
- When a student seems overwhelmed, anxious, or overly frustrated
- When a student is having trouble following along, following directives/directions, etc
- When a student seems to need a break from the current activity or student they are working with
- When a student seems to be over-emotional, upset, etc

## How do I do it:

- Make a laminated card with the word “BREAK” on it
- Provide student with hand held timer setting the timer for no longer than five minutes
- 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 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