



The Association of
Independent Schools
of New South Wales

POSITIVE PRACTICES FOR
CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Teaching classroom procedures

Photo Courtesy of
Heritage College Lake Macquarie

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Teaching sequences for classroom procedures

The explicit teaching of procedures plays a pivotal role in creating a productive learning environment. When procedures are taught and reinforced over time, routines are established, and classrooms run smoothly.

Procedures and routines support to simplify the learning environment, clarify expectations, guide behaviour, provide structure to daily tasks and facilitate smooth transitions between activities to minimise disruptions, and allow teachers to focus on effective instruction. Furthermore, they promote student regulation, and create calmer classrooms. Classroom procedures can be instructional, administrative, or interactive.

Instructional

E.g., getting student attention for instruction, responding during instructional tasks, completing work product, engaging in teacher-led lessons, engaging in group work.

Administrative

E.g., arriving to class, storing equipment, retrieving equipment, packing away, transitions between activities, dismissal, roll call, seating arrangements, getting a drink of water, using the bathroom.

Interactive

E.g., class discussions, group activities, playground, lunch, recess, asking a question, seeking the teacher's attention, table discussions.

Below is a set of teaching sequences specifically designed to support teachers to explicitly teach various classroom procedures. The 'Tell, Show, Practice, Acknowledge' approach is utilised to explicitly teach the following procedures:

- **Instructional:** Handing in work and transitioning to the next activity, Managing noise levels for different activities
- **Administrative:** Raising hands, Moving furniture, Entering the classroom, Class dismissal, Getting and returning classroom equipment/resources, Getting and returning sports equipment
- **Interactive:** Table discussions, Seeking the teacher's attention



Handing in work and transitioning to the next activity

Tell

- Begin by discussing the importance of completing and submitting work in an organised and timely manner. Emphasis how it contributes to the learning process and allows the teacher to provide timely feedback.
- Explain the expectations related to submitting work, such as placing completed work in the designated box on the teacher's desk.
- Discuss the significance of using transition time effectively by engaging in a quiet and purposeful activity while waiting for the next lesson to start. Discuss examples of appropriate activities that can be done.

Acknowledge

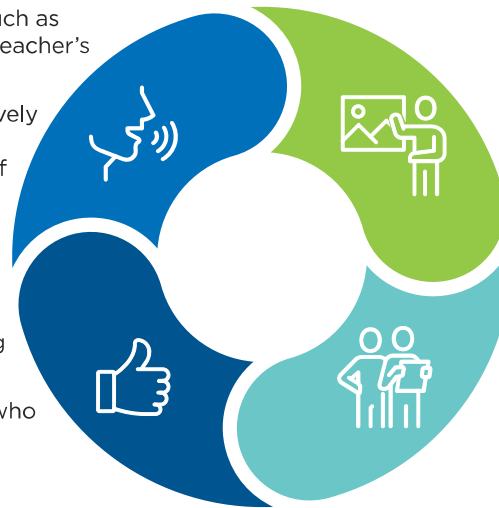
- Positively reinforce the desired behaviour of submitting work and transitioning quietly.
- Use praise and encouragement to recognise students who consistently follow the routine.
- Establish a routine of acknowledging and celebrating successful transitions to reinforce positive behaviour.
- Provide gentle reminders and targeted small group lessons for students who may need additional support in developing this routine.

Show

- Demonstrate the proper way to submit completed work. Model how to approach the teacher's desk, place the work in the designated box, and return to your seat quietly.
- Use visual aids, such as a checklist and choice board for fast finishers, to outline the steps for handing in work and transitioning to the next activity.
- Address potential challenges, such as distractions during the transition or not completing work in the designated time, and demonstrate strategies that could assist with addressing these challenges.

Practice

- Conduct role-playing activities where students practice the routine of handing in work and transitioning to the next activity.
- Practice submitting work efficiently, emphasising the importance of maintaining a quiet and focused atmosphere during the transition.
- Provide opportunities for students to share their experiences and discuss effective strategies for utilising transition time effectively.



Discussion questions for secondary students

- Why is it important to submit completed work in an organised and timely manner?
- How does the way you submit work impact your learning and the teacher's ability to provide feedback?
- What challenges might you face when trying to submit work efficiently? How can you overcome these challenges?
- How can the routine of submitting work and transitioning contribute to a positive and productive classroom environment?
- In what ways can the skill of effective time management during transitions be applicable in other areas of life or work outside of the classroom?

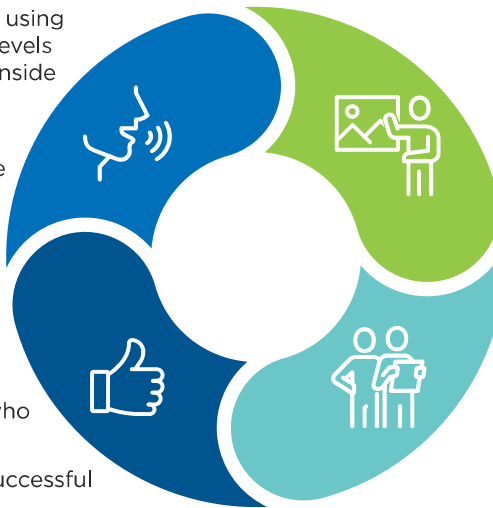
Managing noise levels for different activities

Tell

- Begin by discussing the importance of maintaining appropriate noise levels in the classroom for different types of activities. Emphasis how it contributes to a conducive learning environment and respectful collaboration.
- Explain the expectations related to noise levels, such as using quiet voices during independent work, adjusting noise levels for group activities, and understanding the concept of inside voices.
- Discuss the impact of noise on concentration and the learning experience and highlight the need for everyone in the class to be aware of and adhere to appropriate noise levels.

Acknowledge

- Positively reinforce the desired behaviour of adapting noise levels for various activities.
- Use praise and encouragement to recognise students who consistently follow the routine.
- Establish a routine of acknowledging and celebrating successful noise management to reinforce positive behaviour.
- Provide gentle reminders and targeted small group lessons for students who may need additional support in developing this routine.



Show

- Demonstrate the appropriate and inappropriate noise levels for different activities. Model how to use quiet voices during independent work, adjust noise levels for group activities, and practice using inside voices during discussions.
- Use visual aids, such as a noise level chart, to illustrate the expected noise levels for various activities.
- Address potential challenges, such as maintaining focus during independent work or balancing contributions during group activities, and demonstrate strategies for managing noise effectively.

Practice

- Conduct interactive role-playing activities where students practice adjusting their noise levels for different scenarios.
- Practice adjusting voices during independent work and collaborative activities, allowing students to experience the appropriate noise levels for each situation.
- Provide opportunities for students to share their experiences and discuss effective strategies for managing noise levels during different activities.

Discussion questions for secondary students

- Why is it important to have different noise levels for different activities in the classroom?
- How does the appropriate use of noise levels contribute to a positive learning environment?
- Can you share an experience when the understanding of noise levels positively or negatively affected a group activity or independent work session?
- What challenges might you face when trying to adjust noise levels for different activities? How can you overcome these challenges?
- In what ways can the skill of adapting noise levels be applicable in other areas of life or work outside of the classroom?

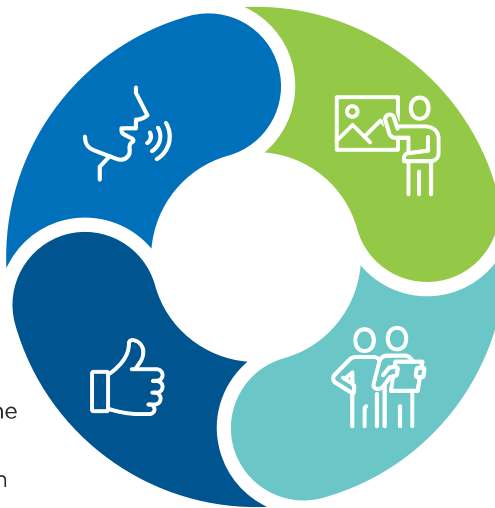
Raising hands

Tell

- Start with a discussion about the importance of raising hands in the classroom. Explain that it helps maintain order, allows everyone to have a chance to speak, and shows respect for the teacher and peers by giving the class an opportunity to hear and to learn and share ideas.
- During the discussion make links to relevant classroom expectations and rules.
- Use age-appropriate language and examples to help students understand why this is a valuable skill.

Acknowledge

- Positively reinforce the desired behaviour.
- Remind students regularly about the importance of raising hands, especially during the first few weeks of the school year as they develop the habit.
- Use gentle reminders and praise rather than focusing on punishment.
- Periodically review the importance of raising hands and reinforce the behaviour throughout the school year.



Show

- Demonstrate the proper way to raise a hand. Use clear and simple language to explain that they should raise their hand with fingers together, not waving it around, to avoid distracting others.
- Model both appropriate and inappropriate ways to raise hands, allowing students to identify the correct behaviour.
- Introduce the class to the phrase “Raise, Wait, and Share” - students must raise their hand and wait for the teacher to call on them before sharing their answer or opinion.

Practice

- Conduct interactive role-playing activities where students get to practice raising their hands in different scenarios.
- Use a ‘Raise your hand’ signal, such as a chime or a visual cue, to prompt students to practice the behaviour.

Discussion questions for secondary students

- Why is it important to raise your hand and wait for the teacher to call on you before speaking?
- How does raising your hand and waiting to be called on show respect for others in the classroom?
- Can you think of times when you might need to raise your hand and wait to be called on outside of school?
- What challenges might you face when trying to raise your hand and wait to be called on? How can you overcome these challenges?
- How can practicing this skill contribute to a positive classroom environment?

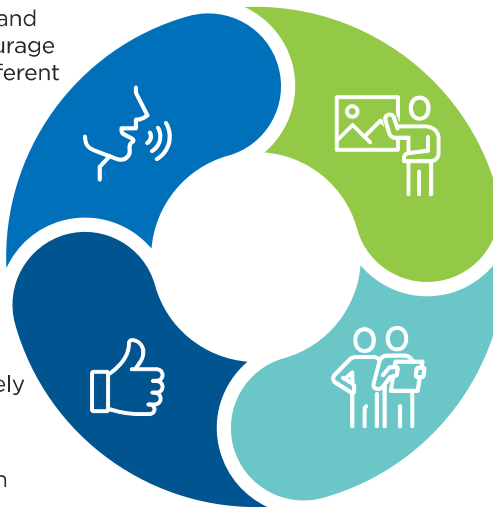
Moving furniture

Tell

- Begin by explaining the purpose of rearranging the room. Discuss how different seating arrangements can support various learning activities, collaboration, and a positive learning environment.
- Engage students in a discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of different seating arrangements. Encourage them to share their opinions on what works best for different activities.
- On the Interactive Whiteboard (IWB) show images of different seating arrangements and share what type of activity each arrangement could be used for.

Acknowledge

- Positively reinforce the desired behaviour.
- Remind students regularly about the importance of safely moving furniture, especially during the first few weeks as they develop the habit.
- Use gentle reminders and praise rather than focusing on punishment.
- Periodically review the importance of moving furniture safely and reinforce the behaviour throughout the school year.



Show

- Demonstrate how to move furniture safely and efficiently. Show students how to move the desks from rows to groups, or groups to a U-shape.
- Show students how to lift chairs, push desks, and create the desired arrangement without causing harm to self, disruptions or damage to the furniture.
- Show students where to put their belongings while the furniture is being moved.
- Give students specific roles such as moving the tables or the chairs.
- Repeat for each seating arrangement.

Practice

- Pair up students and have them practice rearranging the furniture together. This allows them to work collaboratively, discuss the process, and solve any challenges that may arise.
- Practice moving desks into different formations using visual prompts.
- Provide opportunities to practice the procedure by providing frequent opportunities to change the desk formation for learning activities.

Discussion questions for secondary students

- How can changing the seating arrangements impact the dynamics of an activity?
- Can you share an experience where a particular seating arrangement enhanced or hindered your learning?
- Are there any potential challenges or concerns you can think of when rearranging furniture in a classroom? How can these challenges be addressed?
- How might the ability to rearrange furniture be applicable in other areas of life or work outside of the classroom?

Entering the classroom

Tell

- Begin by discussing the importance of entering the classroom in a calm and orderly manner. Emphasis the impact it has on setting a positive tone for the learning environment.
- Explain the connection between entering quietly and efficiently and the overall focus and readiness for the lesson.
- Discuss the classroom expectations related to entering, such as finding assigned seats, unpacking materials, and being ready for the day's activities.
- Use age-appropriate language and examples to help students understand the reasons behind these expectations.

Acknowledge

- Positively reinforce the desired behaviour of entering the classroom calmly and quietly.
- Use praise and encouragement to recognise students who consistently follow the routine.
- Establish a routine of acknowledging and celebrating successful entries to reinforce positive behaviour.
- Provide gentle reminders and targeted small group lessons for students who may need additional support in developing this routine.



Show

- Demonstrate the proper way to line up at the door, wait for the teacher to arrive and then enter the classroom. Model walking quietly, finding your seat, and beginning the routine of unpacking materials.
- Use visual cues, such as a chart or posters, to highlight the steps of entering the classroom.
- Address potential challenges, such as high traffic areas, crowded spaces or distractions, and demonstrate strategies for handling them calmly.
- Introduce a cue, like the teacher standing at the door, that indicates when it's time to enter quietly, providing a clear and consistent signal for students.

Practice

- Conduct interactive role-playing activities where students practice entering the classroom in different scenarios.
- Practice the routine of entering and getting settled efficiently, emphasising the importance of a smooth transition from outside to inside the classroom. You can make this into a game by timing each practice and seeing if the class can improve each practice on a collective PB (personal best).

Discussion questions for secondary students

- Why do you think it is important to enter the classroom calmly and quietly?
- How does the way you enter the classroom affect your readiness to learn and participate in the lesson?
- Can you share an experience when the way students entered the classroom positively or negatively impacted the learning environment?
- What challenges might you face when trying to enter the classroom quietly? How can you overcome these challenges?
- In what ways can the skill of entering a space calmly be applicable in other areas of life or work outside of the classroom?

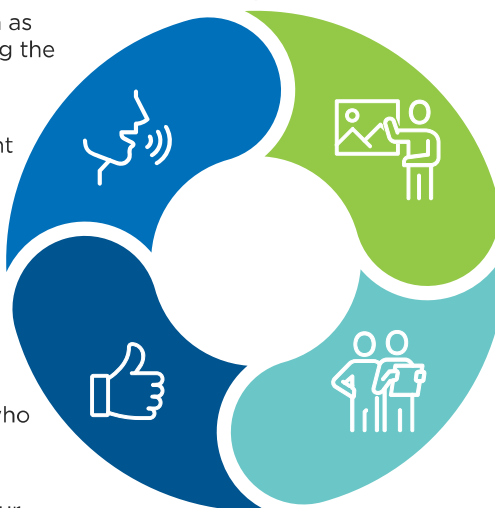
Class dismissal

Tell

- Begin by discussing the significance of a structured and orderly class dismissal. Highlight how it contributes to a smooth transition between classes and the overall efficiency of the school day.
- Explain the expectations related to class dismissal, such as packing up materials, organising belongings, and leaving the classroom in an orderly manner.
- Discuss the importance of respecting others' personal space and the need for a quiet and focused environment during the transition.

Acknowledge

- Positively reinforce the desired behaviour of preparing for class dismissal in an orderly manner.
- Use praise and encouragement to recognise students who consistently follow the routine.
- Establish a routine of acknowledging and celebrating successful class dismissals to reinforce positive behaviour.
- Provide gentle reminders and targeted small group lessons for students who may need additional support in developing this routine.



Show

- Demonstrate the proper way to prepare for class dismissal. Model the process of packing up materials, checking the area for any personal belongings, and leaving the classroom quietly.
- Use visual aids, such as charts or a step-by-step guide, to outline the expected steps during class dismissal.
- Address potential challenges, such as the temptation to rush or engage in disruptive behaviour and demonstrate strategies for maintaining a calm and orderly dismissal.

Practice

- Conduct role-playing activities where students practice the routine of class dismissal in different scenarios.
- Practice the process of packing up efficiently and leaving the classroom quietly, emphasising the importance of a smooth transition for everyone.
- Provide opportunities for students to share their experiences and discuss effective strategies for a successful class dismissal.

Discussion questions for secondary students

- How does the way you prepare for dismissal impact the overall atmosphere as you transition between classes?
- Can you share an experience when the way students prepared for class dismissal positively or negatively affected the learning environment?
- What challenges might you face when trying to prepare for class dismissal efficiently? How can you overcome these challenges?
- How can the routine of class dismissal contribute to a positive and efficient school day?
- In what ways can the skill of preparing for dismissal be applicable in other areas of life or work outside of the classroom?

HANDING IN
WORK AND
TRANSITIONING
TO THE NEXT
ACTIVITY

MANAGING
NOISE LEVELS
FOR DIFFERENT
ACTIVITIES

RAISING HANDS

MOVING
FURNITURE

ENTERING THE
CLASSROOM

CLASS
DISMISSAL

GETTING AND
RETURNING
CLASSROOM
EQUIPMENT/
RESOURCES

GETTING AND
RETURNING
SPORTS
EQUIPMENT

TABLE
DISCUSSION

SEEKING THE
TEACHER'S
ATTENTION

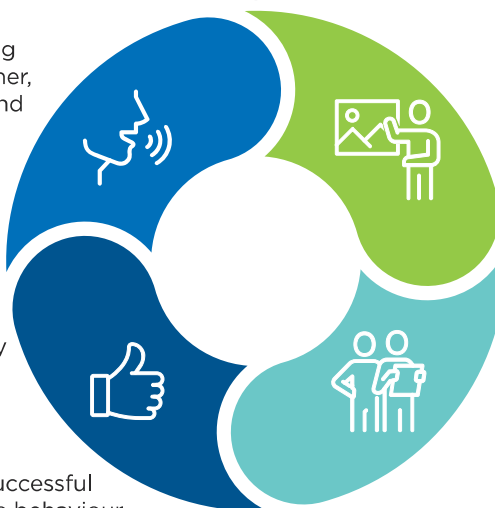
Getting and returning classroom equipment/resources

Tell

- Begin by discussing the importance of responsibly obtaining and returning classroom equipment and resources. Emphasis how it ensures the availability of materials for everyone and fosters a sense of shared responsibility.
- Explain the expectations related to getting and returning items, such as collecting materials in an organised manner, using them responsibly, and returning them promptly and neatly after use to the correct location.
- Discuss the impact of taking care of shared resources on the overall classroom experience and the importance of respecting the property of others.

Acknowledge

- Positively reinforce the desired behaviour of responsibly getting and returning classroom equipment/resources.
- Use praise and encouragement to recognise students who consistently follow the routine.
- Establish a routine of acknowledging and celebrating successful handling of classroom materials to reinforce the positive behaviour.
- Provide gentle reminders and targeted small group lessons for students who may need additional support in developing this routine.



Show

- Demonstrate the proper way to get and return classroom equipment/resources. Model how to approach the collection area, collect materials, use them responsibly, and return them in good condition.
- Use visual aids, such as charts or posters, to outline the steps for getting and returning classroom equipment/resources.
- Address potential challenges, such as forgetting to return items or mishandling equipment, and demonstrate strategies for responsible use and return.

Practice

- Conduct role-playing activities where students practice the routine of getting and returning classroom equipment/resources in different scenarios.
- Practice collecting and returning materials efficiently, emphasising the importance of maintaining the condition of shared resources and returning them to their original location.
- Provide opportunities for students to share their experiences and discuss effective strategies for responsible use and return.

Discussion questions for secondary students

- Why is it important to responsibly collect and return classroom equipment/resources?
- How does the responsible use and return of materials contribute to a positive learning environment?
- Can you share an experience when the handling of classroom resources positively or negatively affected a group activity or individual work?
- What challenges might you face when trying to get and return materials responsibly? How can you overcome these challenges?
- How can the routine of managing classroom resources contribute to a respectful and collaborative classroom culture?
- In what ways can the skill of handling shared resources be applicable in other areas of life or work outside of the classroom?

Getting and returning sports equipment

Tell

- Begin by discussing the importance of responsibly obtaining and returning sports equipment for outdoor lessons. Emphasis how it ensures the safety of everyone involved, fosters teamwork, and maintains the condition of the equipment.
- Explain the expectations related to getting and returning sports equipment, such as collecting items in an organised manner, using them safely, and returning them promptly and neatly after use.
- Discuss the impact of caring for shared sports equipment on the overall enjoyment and success of outdoor lessons.

Acknowledge

- Positively reinforce the desired behaviour of responsibly getting and returning sports equipment.
- Use praise and encouragement to recognise students who consistently follow the routine.
- Establish a routine of acknowledging and celebrating successful handling of sports equipment to reinforce the positive behaviour.
- Provide gentle reminders and targeted small group lessons for students who may need additional support in developing this routine.



Show

- Demonstrate the proper way to collect and return sports equipment for outdoor lessons. Model how to approach the equipment area, collect items, use them safely, and return them to the correct spot in good condition.
- Use visual aids, such as charts or posters, to outline the steps for getting and returning sports equipment.
- Address potential challenges, such as forgetting to return items or improper use of equipment, and demonstrate strategies for responsible use and return.

Practice

- Conduct role-playing activities where students practice the routine of getting and returning sports equipment in different outdoor scenarios.
- Practice collecting and returning equipment efficiently, emphasising the importance of safety and maintaining the condition of shared resources.
- Provide opportunities for students to share their experiences and discuss effective strategies for responsible use and return.

Discussion questions for secondary students

- Why is it important to responsibly collect and return sports equipment for outdoor lessons?
- How does the responsible use and return of sports equipment contribute to a positive outdoor learning experience?
- Can you share an experience when the handling of sports equipment positively or negatively affected a group activity or individual participation?
- What challenges might you face when trying to get and return sports equipment responsibly? How can you overcome these challenges?
- How can the routine of managing sports equipment contribute to teamwork and a positive outdoor learning environment?

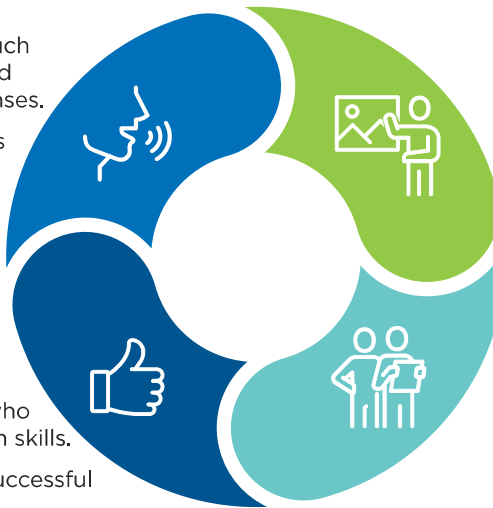
Table discussion

Tell

- Begin by discussing the importance of table discussions as a means of fostering collaboration, critical thinking, and communication skills. Emphasise how they provide opportunities for students to share ideas, listen to others, and build upon each other's thoughts.
- Explain the expectations related to table discussions, such as taking turns speaking, actively listening to others, and contributing to the conversation with thoughtful responses.
- Discuss the benefits of participating in table discussions and how they contribute to a positive and inclusive classroom environment.

Acknowledge

- Positively reinforce the desired behaviour of actively participating in table discussions.
- Use praise and encouragement to recognise students who demonstrate effective communication and collaboration skills.
- Establish a routine of acknowledging and celebrating successful table discussions to reinforce the positive behaviour.
- Provide gentle reminders and guidance for students who may need additional support in developing their discussion skills.



Show

- Demonstrate the proper way to participate in table discussions. Model active listening, asking clarifying questions, and building upon others' ideas.
- Use visual aids, such as role cards or conversation starters, to help scaffold the discussion and keep it focused.
- Address potential challenges, such as dominating the conversation or not actively participating, and demonstrate strategies for effective communication and collaboration.

Practice

- Conduct role-playing activities where students practice participating in table discussions in different scenarios.
- Practice taking turns speaking, actively listening, and responding thoughtfully to others' contributions.
- Provide opportunities for students to reflect on their communication and collaboration skills and set goals for improvement.

Discussion questions for secondary students

- Why is it important to participate actively in table discussions?
- How do table discussions contribute to your learning experience and understanding of the topic?
- What challenges might you face when participating in table discussions? How can you overcome these challenges?
- How can effective communication and collaboration skills in table discussions contribute to a positive classroom environment?

Seeking the teacher's attention

Tell

- Begin by discussing the importance of seeking the teacher's attention in a respectful and appropriate manner. Emphasise how it ensures that students' needs are addressed efficiently and that disruptions are minimised.
- Explain the expectations related to seeking the teacher's attention, such as raising a hand while seated, and approaching the teacher quietly when walking up to them.
- Discuss the importance of patience and respect when seeking the teacher's attention, especially when the teacher is engaged with other students or tasks.

Acknowledge

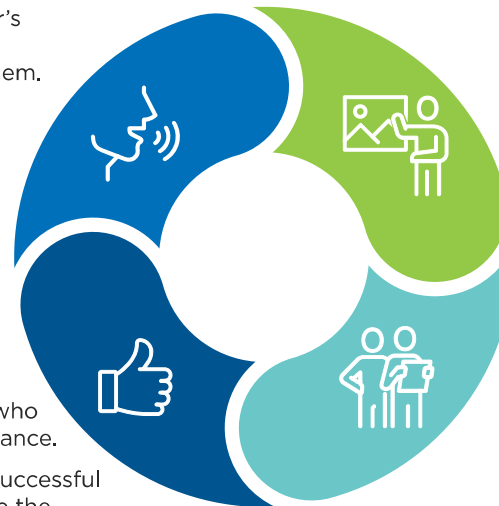
- Positively reinforce the desired behaviour of seeking the teacher's attention respectfully and appropriately.
- Use praise and encouragement to recognise students who demonstrate patience and respect when seeking assistance.
- Establish a routine of acknowledging and celebrating successful instances of seeking the teacher's attention to reinforce the positive behaviour.
- Provide gentle reminders and guidance for students who may need additional support in developing this habit.

Show

- Demonstrate the proper ways to seek the teacher's attention in different situations. Model raising a hand while seated and approaching the teacher quietly when walking up to them.
- Use visual aids, such as posters or a visual guide, to illustrate the expected behaviours for seeking the teacher's attention.
- Address potential challenges, such as impatience or interrupting others, and demonstrate strategies for respectful and patient communication.

Practice

- Conduct role-playing activities where students practice seeking the teacher's attention in different scenarios.
- Practice raising hands, using signals or gestures, and approaching the teacher quietly, emphasising the importance of patience and respect.
- Provide opportunities for students to reflect on their communication and behaviour when seeking the teacher's attention and set goals for improvement.



Discussion questions for secondary students

- Why is it important to seek the teacher's attention respectfully and appropriately?
- How does the way you seek the teacher's attention impact the classroom environment and your learning experience?
- Can you share a time when seeking the teacher's attention positively or negatively affected your ability to get assistance or ask questions?
- What challenges might you face when seeking the teacher's attention? How can you overcome these challenges?
- In what ways can the skill of seeking assistance respectfully be applicable in other areas of life or work outside of the classroom?



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