



# Interval-Breaks

Allowing students to take breaks at different intervals throughout the school day is something that every teacher should consider. These breaks should be structured into the daily activities. It is very taxing both mentally and physically to sit for long hours in one place. It is hard for adults! Imagine how difficult it is for kids!

Interval- breaks will help to diminish students' restlessness, refocus their attention, and increase their brain power. Interval breaks can last from 5 to 10 minutes and should be given hourly. There are no 'hard or fast rules'. The teacher is a liberty to set a time frame that works for her specific classroom situation.

The activities students engage in during the breaks should be structured and teacher-directed. It is always more relaxing and effective to softly play music during these breaks. Classical music is great!

While the music is playing, have students stand behind their chairs to begin with. Then have them execute various exercises (not fast-paced). The teacher is at liberty to use a variety of exercises that will release tension, shake off restlessness and re-energize the students. These exercises could include stretching, bending, gliding movements, etc.



You will find an increase in students' attention and productivity when these breaks are incorporated into the daily classroom routine. Students will enjoy these breaks, have fun, and be energized for the next academic event.





# Increasing Students' Response

Imagine a class where every student is actively engaged in his/her learning! Where class discussion involves every single child in the room! Where even the shiest student is participating in classroom activity! Fantastic!!

More and more teachers are becoming aware of the power of cooperative learning and the structures and strategies that entails. Why not make your classroom teaching/ learning experience more rewarding and successful by incorporating some simple cooperative structures which will ensure an increase in students' response? Try a few of these:

1. **Think-Pair-Share:** This is a structure for enhancing thinking skills and student involvement. The teacher poses a problem and students are given a specific time to individually think about the question. At the teacher's signal, students will form pairs, usually with a team mate, to discuss the question. The teacher will signal when it is share time, and it is during this time that students will be called upon to share with the whole class.



2. **Think-Square-Share:** This is similar to think-pair-share. The difference is that instead of pairing, students square. This means that after thinking alone about the question, students will square, that is, they will discuss the problem in their group or team instead ( a group/team can be 3 to 5 students). After which, they will share with the whole class.
3. **Four Corners:** This structure helps students not only to take a stance but also to value and appreciate differences. It can be used at the start or finish of a lesson. The teacher announces the choices/ corners (four in this case). The corners should be numbered, with visuals posted if possible. Students think about their preference and write down their preferred number. At the teacher's signal, students move to their corner of choice, pair with another student and express the reasons for their preference. They then form groups of four within each corner,



and the students will paraphrase their partners from the previous pair. The teacher then calls on students from the corners (one corner at a time) to share with the class reasons for each choice. For example, students can be asked the question, "Which of these four objects is Jesus most like to you; bread, rock, water, or, light?"



4. Roundtable: In this structure, each student is given the opportunity to contribute to the group in a written form. It lends itself to many subject areas. Each team is given one piece of paper and a pen or pencil. The teacher gives the direction; one student makes a contribution on the paper, then passes it to the student on the left, who makes a contribution and passes it to the next student. The paper and pen are passed around the table. It could be a simple activity such as naming as many states in the U.S. as possible (may need to be timed). Each group member will write a state name and pass the paper to the next person to do likewise. An alternative to roundtable is roundrobin. It is similar, except that students' contributions are oral instead of written.



5. Name Cards: The teacher writes the name of each student on a card. These cards are used whenever the class as a whole is required to respond to a problem, a question, or to make other contributions. The teacher shuffles the cards and stops. The student whose name is at the top of the pile gives his or her response. Using name cards helps the teacher avoid being biased or mean when a student is called upon to provide a response.





# Parent-Teacher Partnership

To boost students' success, it is important for teachers and parents to partner together. This can be done in several ways. One way is to get parents to agree to and support a homework policy. At your back-to-school night, you can introduce parents to the idea and what it entails. Be sure to have parents understand that this is all about creating avenues for their child to succeed. The policy should be given to parents to sign and return to the teacher.

## Homework Policy

Homework is a valuable part of your child's learning experience. Homework helps students to review and practice concepts that were taught in class. For this reason I will enforce the following homework policy:

1. Students who have missing homework will stay in for recess or detention to make up work.
2. After a student misses 3 assignments in one marking period, the teacher will contact the parent to help resolve the problem.
3. After a student misses 5 assignments in one marking period, a school activity will be taken away. This could include assemblies, special programs, or field trips. All students will start with a clean slate at the start of each marking period.

I also feel that students who do all their homework each marking period should be rewarded. Therefore popcorn and a movie will be provided at the end of each marking period for all students with perfect homework.

Thank you: The \_\_\_\_\_ grade teacher

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I have read and discussed the homework policy with my child.

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Child's name

Date

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Parent's signature

Date



# Students' Self-Assessment Form

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Do I .....</b>	<b>Never</b>					<b>Always</b>
1. Make an effort to get along with my teacher?	1	2	3	4	5	
2. Attempt to understand things before I actually do them?	1	2	3	4	5	
3. Try to be positive about my ability to do things I'm asked to do?	1	2	3	4	5	
4. Make an effort to get along with other students?	1	2	3	4	5	
5. Endeavor to make the classroom an orderly place?	1	2	3	4	5	
6. Endeavor to make the classroom a comfortable place?	1	2	3	4	5	
7. Try to see the value in the things I'm asked to do?	1	2	3	4	5	

*Adapted from Dimension of Learning - Teacher's Manual*





# Establishing Routines

You've heard it over and over again! "The first day of the school year is the most crucial!" The interaction that takes place between teacher and students on the first day of school, more likely than not, determines the ambience for the rest of the school year.

Establishing and maintaining good classroom management does not just simply happen; it is the result of planning, implementing, being consistent and fair.

I've heard it said that "every opportunity of a great teacher is teaching." The master teacher will therefore ensure that, as much as possible, every distraction and disruptive incident will be eliminated from the classroom. When this is done, the focus will be on teaching and learning. One great way of guaranteeing good classroom management is to establish routines on the first day of school. Routines provide a sense of order and stability for students and make the teacher's work more productive and smoothly executed. In addition to establishing routines, the teacher must provide opportunity for students to understand and practice these routines. This is usually done in the first two weeks of school. Students should be made to understand the reason/s for each routine. They should see each routine being modeled and be given the chance to practice the routine.

Routines to be established and maintained may include but not be confined to the following:

- Procedures for entering classroom
- Classroom rules
- Procedures for leaving the classroom
- Procedures for getting attention
- Procedures for participating in classroom activities
- Procedures for cooperative learning
- Procedures for lining up and walking in line
- Procedures for students' questions and response
- Procedures for bathroom use
- Procedures for group roles and duties

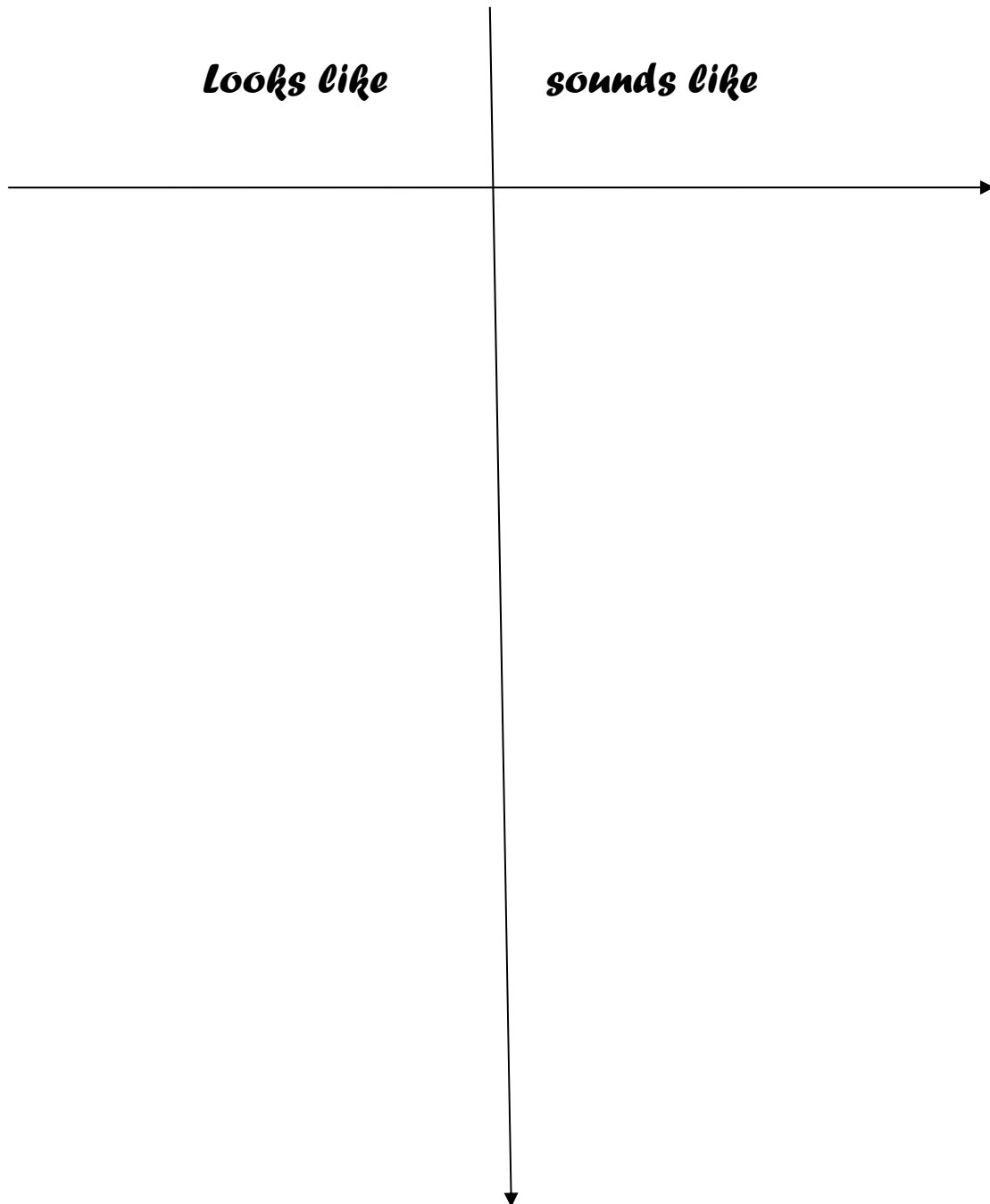
Creating a T Chart and working with students to describe what each routine looks like and sounds like is a good way to ensure understanding of the meaning of each routine. Students should be allowed to practice these routines/ procedures since this is the foundational framework on which the class will be operated from the rest of the school year.





# T Chart

T Charts are useful tools for teaching social skills, or for making abstract ideas more concrete. They can also be used to help students grasp a descriptive picture of specific routines. One might ask the question, “What does paying attention look like or sound like?” Or, even, “what does keeping my environment clean look like or sound like?” T Charts create clearer pictures and enhance understanding.





# Class Building Activity

Class building activities or team building activities are great ways of providing opportunities for students to get to know and accept each other. This acceptance will engender healthy and productive learning environments.

## People Hunt

Find someone who	Name
Loves reading	
Can repeat Genesis 1: 1	
Plays basketball	
Plays a musical instrument	
Was born in the same city as you	
Keeps a journal / diary	
Likes to sing	
Has visited another country	
Can ride a bicycle	
Is related to a preacher, teacher or doctor	
Likes to draw or writes poems	
Has the same favorite Bible character as you	
Speaks another language apart from English	