



## Strategy Tool: Teaching Behavior Expectations

*Starting the Year Off Right - Example*

Prior to the beginning of the school year, it can be especially helpful to identify three to five important behavior expectations (guidelines for success) that all students will need to understand to be successful in your classroom. These expectations may be aligned with broader school-wide behavior expectations, but it is also important to consider what that means in your classroom.

- 1 Use the following form to identify three to five behavior expectations.

<b>Expectations for Success</b>
Select 3 to 5 broad and important positive characteristics that will allow students to be successful in your classroom all year long.
1. Being respectful
2. Being responsible
3. Being a good learner
4.
5.

- 2 Determine what specific behaviors students will display in your classroom to effectively demonstrate understanding of the behavioral expectations. The more specific you can be about what the expectations look like in your classroom, the more likely students will understand and demonstrate the corresponding behaviors.

<b>Behavioral Expectations in the Classroom</b>	
Determine what specific behaviors students will display in your classroom to show they are being successful according to each expectation.	
<b>Example:</b> Be responsible	Students will arrive on time to class.
	Students will come to school with the materials they need.
	Students will finish and turn in the work they start.
Being respectful	Students listen when others talk.
	Students will use kind words.
	Students will take turns and share with others.
Being a good learner	Students will be active participants during learning activities.
	Students will complete all work when assigned.
	Students will try their best in all they do.



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**3** Develop a plan for teaching behavior expectations at the start of the year.

### "Creating a Lesson Plan for Teaching Behavior Expectations"

Use the following form to develop a lesson plan to teach the behavior expectations in your classroom. Teach each behavior within each category using direct instruction.

Begin by identifying the expectation (e.g., Respectful) and a statement of why it is important in the setting you select. For example: *"It is important for everyone to be respectful and listen the first time you are asked to do something so that we don't waste time and get to all the activities we need to do throughout the day."*

Next, decide what the expectation does and does not look like. Tell the students what they should do first. Then, tell them what it would not look like. It can be helpful to identify behaviors that occur in the classroom that you want to see less when describing specifically what the expectation is not (e.g., *"Being respectful and following directions means that you stop what you are doing, put your eyes on me, and listen to the direction the first time. Talking while I am talking or not cleaning up right away when I ask you to clean up is not being respectful."*).

Then, provide a prompt that will indicate to the students that it is time to use the behavior expectation in the setting (e.g., *"OK class, let's all be safe by moving to the carpet, keeping our hands and feet to ourselves without talking. Ready? Begin."*).

Behavior Expectation	
Expectation:	Why is this important?
Be respectful	When students are respectful, everyone is able to learn and feel like part of the classroom family.
What does it look like?	What does it <b>not</b> look like?
Being respectful is using kind words when talking with others, even when you might not agree with what they say.	Being respectful does not look like talking when others are trying to share or saying unkind words.
Provide the following prompt/precorrection:	
"During classroom discussion, we will be respectful by using kind words, listening when others are talking, and waiting for your turn to share."	



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Next, decide how you will provide students with the opportunity to practice the behavior expectations.

If you want to demonstrate what not to do, be sure to do this yourself, as students don't need to practice not meeting expectations (e.g., "Is this how we go to the carpet?" The teacher skips and gently bumps into a student. **Students:** "No." **Teacher:** "What wasn't safe about how I went to the carpet?" **Students:** "You didn't walk and you didn't keep your body safe.").

You could have one or two students first show the behavior (e.g., "Melissa, can you show us being safe by walking quietly to the carpet?" Melissa walks to carpet and sits in a carpet square with her name on it. "Great walking. You went right to your spot on the carpet without talking and kept your hands and feet to yourself.").

After one student or a small group of students demonstrates the behavior expectation, you can have all of the students practice.

Give a lot of support to make sure that your students will be successful. Be sure to follow up successful practice with plenty of reinforcement using behavior-specific praise (e.g., "Great work! You all lined up responsibly by keeping your hands and feet to yourselves.").

Students will practice by:	
Practice 1:	Practice 2:
Students will move to circle time, sit in their carpet squares, and raise their hands if they want to share.	We will practice moving back to our tables. Then, students will be asked to cooperate by sharing materials on their desks.
I will provide encouragement and give attention to students meeting the expectation by:	
1. I will give verbal behavior-specific praise to students who I see being respectful during circle time.	
2. I will give points to tables of students who listen when others are talking and state, "I like how table X is being respectful by listening while others are talking."	
3. I will provide behavior-specific praise to tables of students who are sharing materials with one another.	

- 4** Next, develop a matrix that you can display in the classroom or other areas which includes the behaviors aligned with each expectation for various settings (i.e., hallway, bathroom, cafeteria). Typically, no more than three to five specific behaviors that represent broader behavior expectation categories (e.g., Respect) are included on the matrix. The following table includes examples of behavior expectations for the classroom. Consider allowing students to share how being responsible, safe, and respectful might look different at home.

Example: In Classroom		
Be responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Complete seatwork</li> <li>✓ Turn in signed homework folders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Bring needed materials to class</li> <li>✓ Follow instructions the first time asked</li> </ul>
Be safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Use materials the correct way</li> <li>✓ Keep chair legs on the floor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Get teacher permission to leave class</li> </ul>
Be respectful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Listen when others are talking</li> <li>✓ Accept other opinions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ask for assistance by quietly raising your hand</li> </ul>