

Big
Conversations
Build
Brighter
Futures!



Teachers
Parents
Homeschool
Caregivers

Classroom
Culture

Life Skills
& Independence

Social
Emotional
Learning (SEL)

Positive
Choices

Building
Relationships

Literacy
& Language

Open-Ended
Questions

Social
Awareness

Car
Conversations

Kindness
& Empathy

Home-Life
Talks

Critical
Thinking

Bath Time
& Bedtime

Big Feelings,
Small Moments

Wondering
& Silly Questions

And So
Much More!

The Big Book

A Guide to Classroom Success

Ask
Listen
Encourage
Be Curious
Make Connections
Grow Together

Little
Questions
Can Make
a Big
Difference!

Curiosity

Kindness

Confidence

Creativity

Brighter Futures

Real Questions
Real Connections
A Brighter Tomorrow

Be
Curious
Be Kind
Be You!

Great
Conversations
Happen
Every Day!

By Retired Teacher

Ronnette Curls



A simple:

Fist Bump



A fist bump shows kindness and connection!

Handshake



A handshake shows respect and care!

Smile



A smile can brighten someone's day!

Personalized Greeting



Use their name and say something positive!

...can completely shift a student's day.



Positive People Create Brighter Days!

Small Greetings ♥ Big Impact!

BE KIND
BE A FRIEND
MAKE A DIFFERENCE



HIGH-IMPACT CLASSROOM PRACTICES

Small Actions. Big Differences.

Here are some of the strongest practices successful educators consistently use:



Stronger
Students
Brighter
Futures

Practice

Impact



Morning Meetings

Builds community



SEL Check-Ins

Improves emotional awareness



Student Choice

Increases engagement



Positive Reinforcement

Improves behavior



Visual Learning

Increases retention



Collaborative Learning

Builds social skills



Reflection Journals

Encourages self-awareness



Relationship-Building

Improves classroom behavior



Hands-On Learning

Boosts motivation



Consistent Routines

Creates emotional safety

Kind
Classrooms
Change
Lives

Support Today.
Stronger Tomorrow.





Classroom Culture Goal

Happy Students
Brighter Futures!

The most successful classrooms feel like:

Community



We are a team.
We support,
respect, and
uplift each other.



Safety



Everyone feels
physically and
emotionally safe
to be themselves.



Encouragement

You
Can
Do It!



We cheer for
effort, celebrate
growth, and
believe in each other.



Creativity



We explore,
imagine, and
try new ideas.



Big
Ideas
Start
Here!

Structure



We have clear
expectations,
routines, and
consistent support.



Joy



We laugh,
have fun, and
find happiness
in learning.



Accountability

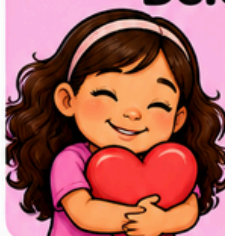


I CAN
MAKE A
GOOD
CHOICE!

We take
responsibility,
learn from mistakes,
and keep trying.



Belonging



Everyone is
valued, included,
and accepted
just as they are.



You
Belong
Here!



"Students may forget worksheets...
but they rarely forget how a teacher made them feel."



KIND
TEACHERS
CHANGE
THE WORLD!



Topics Students REALLY NEED TODAY

Here are high-impact classroom topics many schools still don't teach enough!



Life Skills

Skills for a Stronger, Happier, More Successful Tomorrow!

Communication

Share • Listen • Be Respectful



- ✓ Express your thoughts and feelings
- ✓ Listen to others
- ✓ Use kind words
- ✓ Ask questions
- ✓ Work through differences

Goal Setting

Dream • Plan • Do • Achieve



- ✓ Set meaningful goals
- ✓ Make a plan
- ✓ Take small steps
- ✓ Keep trying
- ✓ Celebrate progress

Time Management

Make Time for What Matters



- ✓ Prioritize tasks
- ✓ Create a schedule
- ✓ Stay focused
- ✓ Avoid distractions
- ✓ Balance school, home and fun

Responsibility

Be Dependable • Do Your Part



- ✓ Follow through on commitments
- ✓ Take care of your belongings
- ✓ Be honest
- ✓ Do your best
- ✓ Help at home and school

Problem-Solving

Think • Try • Find a Solution



- ✓ Stay calm
- ✓ Look at the problem
- ✓ Think of different solutions
- ✓ Try a solution
- ✓ Learn from mistakes



Today's Life Skills
Build Tomorrow's Success!



REAL
SKILLS
REAL
OPPORTUNITIES





Ways to Build Stronger Relationships With Students

Connection Today • Brighter Tomorrows! ♥

Learn Their Interests

Get to know your students as individuals.
Show genuine interest in what they enjoy! ♥

Know:



Favorite games



Music



Sports



Hobbies



Dreams



Family traditions



Ask.
Listen.
Remember.
It matters!



Students connect deeply when adults remember small details.



Real Relationships
Lead to Brighter Futures!



Every student has a story.
Get to know it!





You
Matter!

Mental Health Awareness

Healthy Minds. Brighter Futures! ♥

It's OK
to Feel
Your
Feelings



Age-appropriate conversations about:

Stress



Stress is what we feel when we have a lot to do or something is hard. It's normal!

- ✓ Take deep breaths
- ✓ Take a break
- ✓ Talk to a trusted adult
- ✓ Do something you enjoy

Anxiety



Anxiety can make us feel worried or nervous, even about things that seem small. You are not alone!

- ✓ Name your feelings
- ✓ Try calm breathing
- ✓ Use positive self-talk
- ✓ Talk to someone you trust

Self-Care



Self-care means taking care of your body, mind, and feelings. When you take care of yourself, you can do your best!

- ✓ Get enough sleep
- ✓ Eat healthy foods
- ✓ Move your body
- ✓ Do things that make you happy
- ✓ Be kind to yourself

Asking for Help



Asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness. We all need support sometimes.

- ✓ Talk to a trusted adult
- ✓ Share how you feel
- ✓ Ask a friend for support
- ✓ Let someone know when you need help
- ✓ Remember – you are not alone!



Healthy Minds ♥ Kind Hearts ♥ Bright Futures

Together
We Can
Make a
Difference!



Connection
Creates
Confidence!

Ways to Build Stronger Relationships With Students

Students
Thrive When
They Feel
Seen, Heard
and Valued!

Real People ♥ Real Relationships ♥ Brighter Futures

When
Students
Feel Known,
They Learn,
Grow and
Belong!

KINDNESS
RESPECT
TRUST
SUPPORT
SUCCESS

Learn Their Interests

Take time to get to know your students as individuals.
Show genuine interest in what they enjoy!

Know:

Favorite
games



Music



Sports



Students
connect
deeply when
adults
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small details.

Hobbies



Dreams



Family
traditions



It shows
you care!

LISTEN

ENCOURAGE

BE CURIOUS

BUILD TRUST

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Stronger Relationships
Lead to Brighter Learners
and a Kinder Classroom!

Know
Support
Believe
Empower



Respect & Empathy



Be Kind ♥ Be Understanding ♥ Be a Friend

Stronger Together ♥ A Kinder World

When we respect and understand each other,
we create a safer, kinder, and more inclusive classroom
where everyone belongs!

Students Need Direct Instruction On:



Listening

Pay attention and let others finish.



Tone of voice

Use kind and respectful words.



Understanding others

Recognize and accept different feelings and experiences.



Perspective-taking

Think about how others might feel.



Inclusion

Make sure everyone feels welcome and valued.



Important Topics to Discuss:



Respect

Treat everyone with kindness and consideration.



Kindness

Do and say kind things on purpose.



Compassion

Care about how others feel and be helpful.



Helping others

Look for ways to support classmates and friends.



Understanding differences

Celebrate what makes each person unique.

Be a Good Listener



"Listen with your ears, heart and mind."

Use a Kind Voice



"Kind words build friends!"

Be Empathetic



"Try to see things from their point of view."

Include Everyone



"A kind classroom is a place where everyone belongs!"



"Respect, kindness, and understanding
make the world a brighter place."

Good People
Change
the World!

Be Consistent

Same
Expectations
Help Everyone
Succeed!

Students feel emotionally safe
when expectations stay predictable.

Consistency builds trust
more than strictness.

Ways to Be Consistent:

- ✓ Keep the same expectations.
- ✓ Follow routines.
- ✓ Use consistent language.
- ✓ Be fair with all students.
- ✓ Follow through.
- ✓ Stay calm and predictable.

Consistency
Builds
Confidence!



Same
Routines



Clear
Expectations



A Safe
Environment



Stronger
Relationships



Greater
Success

Use Humor

Laughter
Makes
Learning
Brighter!

Students LOVE teachers who can laugh with them.
Joy increases engagement.

Ways to Use Humor:

- ✓ Be silly (in a positive way).
- ✓ Use funny voices.
- ✓ Make lighthearted jokes.
- ✓ Find humor in everyday moments.
- ✓ Laugh with students, not at them.
- ✓ Keep it age-appropriate.



A Joyful Classroom
Is Powerful Classroom!

Happy
Teachers
Happy
Students
Happy Days!

Every Student Has Value!

Confidence & Identity

Strong Minds ♥ Bright Futures ♥ Be You!

Differences Make Our World Brighter!

Many students silently struggle with self-worth.

Let's help them see their value!

Teach:



Positive self-talk

Use kind and encouraging words.



Goal setting

Help them set and reach goals.



Growth mindset

Teach that effort leads to progress.



Identity

Help them understand and appreciate who they are.



Believing in themselves

Remind them they are capable and important.



Topics to Discuss:



"Who am I?"

Explore their interests, values, and what makes them special.



"What are my strengths?"

Help them recognize their unique talents.



"Mistakes help me grow."

Normalize mistakes as part of learning.



"My voice matters."

Encourage them to speak up and share their ideas and feelings.



When students believe in themselves, they can do amazing things!



Every Student Has Value!



Confidence & Identity

Strong Minds ♥ Bright Futures ♥ Be You!

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Active
Minds
Learn
Better!

Add Movement & Interaction

Students were not designed to sit quietly all day.

Movement helps the brain, builds engagement, and makes learning FUN!

Active
Students
Are Happier
Learners!



Movement
Today
Leads to
Brighter
Tomorrows!

Try:

Gallery Walks



Students move around the room to explore ideas.

Classroom Scavenger Hunts



Get students moving while reinforcing skills.

Role Play



Act it out to build understanding and confidence.

Debate Corners



Let students move to a side and share their ideas respectfully.

Team Challenges



Work together
Solve problems
Build teamwork!

Stations / Rotations



Move from station to station for hands-on learning.

Movement Brain Breaks



Stretch, dance, wiggle, and recharge!

"Teach the Class" Student Moments



Let students share what they know!

A Moving
Classroom
Is a Brighter
Classroom!

Even a 3-minute movement break can improve focus dramatically.

Move ♥ Engage ♥ Learn ♥ Grow



Movement Builds Better Learners!

Conflict Resolution

Different People
Can Still Be
Friends!



Many students truly do not know
HOW to solve conflict.

Let's teach them the skills for a
kinder, safer, and more respectful classroom!



Solve
Problems
Choose Kindness
Grow Together!



Teach:

"I feel" statements

I feel
when

Help students express
their feelings in a calm
and respectful way.

Apologizing correctly

I'm
sorry
for...
I will
try to...

Teach sincere
apologies and how
to make things right.

Active listening

- Look at the speaker
- Give your full attention
- Don't interrupt
- Show you understand

Problem-solving steps

1. Stop and calm down.
2. Talk about what happened.
3. Listen to each other.
4. Think of solutions.
5. Agree on a plan.
6. Give it a try!

Walking away from drama

Teach students it's OK
to walk away, get help,
and choose peace.

Role-play helps tremendously!



Use real-life scenarios so students
can practice and feel prepared.

BE KIND

LISTEN

SOLVE

RESPECT

MAKE BETTER
CHOICES

A Peaceful Classroom Is Possible!

- ✓ Fewer problems
- ✓ Stronger relationships
- ✓ More respect
- ✓ Happier students
- ✓ A safer learning environment



Calm
Minds
Kind Hearts
Brighter
Days!

Respect
Each Other
Solve Together
Grow Stronger!



Kind
People
Create
Brighter
Classrooms!



Conflict Happens... Kindness Solves It!

Talk Listen Understand Find Solutions Move Forward



♥ Emotional Regulation ♥

Helping students understand, express, and manage their emotions in healthy and positive ways.

Teach students:

- ✓ Naming emotions
- ✓ Calm-down strategies
- ✓ Coping skills
- ✓ Breathing exercises
- ✓ How emotions affect behavior



Pause ♥ Breathe ♥ Choose ♥ Grow

Topics to Explore:

- ♥ Big feelings vs small feelings
- ♥ What anger feels like
- ♥ Anxiety and worry
- ♥ Frustration tolerance

Name It!



I feel happy!



Notice It!



I feel sad.



Talk About It!



I feel worried.



Calm It!



I can take a deep breath.



Choose It!



I can make a good choice.



Feel Understand Manage Grow!

Calm-Down Strategies

- ✓ Deep breathing
- ✓ Count to 10
- ✓ Take a break
- ✓ Use positive self-talk
- ✓ Try a calming activity (drawing, stretching, fidget tool)

It's OK to have big feelings. What matters is what we do next!



Emotions Are Normal ♥ You Are Not Alone ♥ You Can Do This!

Stronger
Minds
Kinder Hearts
Brighter
Futures!

Powerful SEL Topics

for the Classroom

Social
Emotional
Learning
Helps Every
Child Succeed!

Teach students:



Naming emotions

Help them identify what they feel.



Calm-down strategies

Give them tools to feel safe and in control.



Coping skills

Teach healthy ways to handle challenges.



Breathing exercises

Use simple breathing techniques to relax.



How emotions affect behavior

Help them see the connection.

Helping students understand, express, and manage their emotions in healthy and positive ways.



Feel ♥ Learn ♥ Grow ♥ Belong

Topics to Explore:



Big feelings vs. small feelings

All feelings are valid. Some are big, some are small.



What anger feels like

Recognize the signs and learn healthy ways to express anger.



Anxiety and worry

Talk about what worry feels like and how to find calm.



Frustration tolerance

Help students keep trying, even when things are hard.

Name It!



Happy



Sad



Angry



Worried



Excited



Frustrated



Calm

Calm-Down Strategies



Take deep breaths



Count to 10



Use a calming tool



Read a book



Listen to music



Draw or color



Talk to a trusted adult

Calm Minds
Bright Futures!

Feel It ♥ Handle It ♥ Grow From It!

You Can Do It!

Be Kind to Yourself

All Feelings Matter

You Are Not Alone

Progress, Not Perfection

A Brighter You!



What?

Realia are real-life objects that enable children to make connections to their own lives as they try to make sense of new concepts and ideas.

When?

During and after reading.



Why?

Objects provide a concrete manipulative for students to handle while listening to the read aloud. The neuron stimulation from physical movement during the read aloud also helps students to conceptualize the ideas and themes present in the text. Realia also create total physical responses that help students recall ideas and themes from the text in later discussions.

How? Follow These Steps:

1 Select a text.

Choose a Perspectives central text to read aloud.



2 Identify key ideas.

Determine what themes, messages, information and facts are being communicated through the text.



3 Brainstorm objects.

Think of everyday objects that can be used as a manipulative during the read aloud. Realia can also include music.



4 Distribute objects.

Give each student an object before reading.



- Use authentic replicas (instead of still photos).
- For historical accounts, try to use real objects or visit a museum.

5 Make connections.

Direct students to connect the object to their understanding of the text while they listen.



6 Discuss and reflect.

After the read aloud, discuss student connections using the questions.



Discussion Questions:

- ? How is the object related to the text?
- ? How does the object represent the characters in the text?
- ? How does the object relate to the speaker of the text?
- ? How can the object help you remember the message or theme of the text?
- ? What, if any, other objects could represent the text's message or theme?

Examples of Realia



Apple (food)



Toy Car (transportation)



Shell (ocean)



Spoon (cooking)



Globe (places)



Stuffed Animal (friends)



Leaves (nature)



Music (sounds)



Old Telephone (history)



♥ Real Objects. Real Connections. Real Learning! ♥

Imagine
Create
Learn
Grow
♥

Make Learning Visual & Creative

Visual
Learners
Are
Powerful
Learners!
♥

Different
Ways to
Learn!
♥

Many students learn better
through visuals than lectures.

When learning is fun, engaging, and creative,
EVERY student can succeed!

See It
Create It
Do It
Remember It!
♥

Try These Creative Strategies:

Comic-Style Lessons



Use comics to explain
concepts in a fun
and engaging way.

Storytelling



Bring lessons to life
with characters
and real-life connections.

Music



Use songs, chants,
and rhymes to
teach and remember.

Art Integration



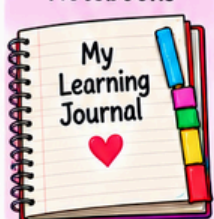
Let students express
learning through
drawing, painting,
and crafts.

Videos



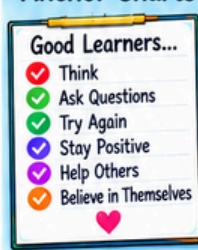
Use short, engaging
videos to show, explain,
and inspire.

Interactive Notebooks



Have students create
hands-on notebooks
with notes, drawings,
and reflections.

Anchor Charts



Use colorful charts
to show key ideas
and reminders.

Games



Turn learning into
a game to increase
engagement and
motivation.

Challenges



Give fun challenges
that encourage
critical thinking
and problem-solving.

Simulations



Use real-life simulations
to make learning
meaningful and
memorable.

Creative
Classrooms
Build
Brighter
Futures!
♥

See It ♥ Create It ♥ Do It
Learn It ♥ Remember It!

♥ Different Learners. Brighter Possibilities! ♥



Give Every Child a Voice

Listen
Include
Respect
Empower
Together
We Grow!

My
ideas
matter!

Young children become more confident and engaged when they know their **ideas**, **feelings**, and **choices** matter.

I have
a voice!

Ways to Encourage Children's Voices

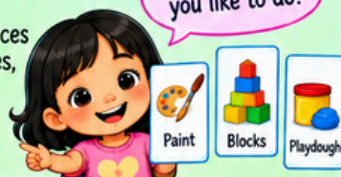
1 Classroom Helper Jobs

Let children choose ways to help.



2 Choice Time

Offer simple choices between activities, books, centers, or materials.



3 Show & Tell

Give children opportunities to share something important to them.



4 Question of the Day

Ask a fun question each morning.



5 Classroom Voting

Which book should we read?

Vote on a book, song, game, or activity.



6 Circle-Time Conversations

Give every child an opportunity to talk and listen.



7 Draw & Tell

Let children draw their ideas and explain their pictures.



8 Planning Time

Ask children what they would like to explore, build, create, or learn.



Small Voices Make a Big Difference!

Listen ♥ Include ♥ Support ♥ Empower ♥ Watch Them Grow!



Teacher Tip:



**Small supports
make a big difference!**



For children who are still developing language, provide pictures, gestures, objects, or two simple choices so they can participate without needing a long verbal response.



Listen carefully, give children enough time to respond, and show genuine interest in what they communicate.



Be patient. Every child has a voice!



Pictures



Gestures



Objects



Two Simple Choices

**Listen
Respect
Encourage
Include**



Every Little Voice Matters! ♥

When preschoolers are given opportunities to choose, share, question, create, and lead, they begin to see themselves as important members of their classroom community.



♥ Happy Children ♥ Confident Learners ♥ Brighter Tomorrows! ♥



Preschool-Friendly Implementation Examples

Simple Ideas That Make a Big Difference! ♥



1 Classroom Helper Jobs

Place picture cards of classroom jobs on a board. Children can choose jobs such as:

- Line Leader
- Book Helper
- Plant Helper
- Table Helper
- Door Helper
- Clean-Up Helper



2 Choice Time

Instead of telling every child to complete the same activity, offer two or three choices.



Paint



Build with Blocks



Playdough

Would you like to paint, build with blocks, or work with playdough?



3 Show & Tell

Invite one or two children each day to bring or choose something to share.

Ask:

Why is this special to you?



4 Question of the Day

Post a simple question children can answer with their name card, picture, or hand signal.

Question of the Day:

Would you rather play outside or inside?



Outside



Inside

Which do you like better—apples or bananas?



5 Classroom Voting

Hold up two books and let children vote on which one the class should read. Count the votes together and talk about which choice received more.



6 Circle-Time Conversations

Pass around a special Talking Teddy or other classroom object. The child holding it gets a turn to speak while classmates practice listening.

My turn to share!

- ♥ Be Kind
- ♥ Be a Good Listener
- ♥ Take Turns
- ♥ Everyone Matters



7 Draw & Tell

Ask children to draw something they enjoyed doing. Meet with them individually or in small groups and ask:

Tell me about your picture.



8 Planning Time

Before centers, ask:

What are you going to make today?

A child might respond,

I'm going to build a zoo with the blocks!



- ♥ Explore
- ♥ Create
- ♥ Build
- ♥ Imagine
- ♥ Learn

When Kids Have a Voice, They Shine!

Listen ♥ Encourage ♥ Support ♥ Empower ♥ Grow Together!

I have ideas!

Questions Preschool Teachers Can Ask

I am important!

SMALL VOICES
MAKE A
BIG
DIFFERENCE!

KIND
PEOPLE
TEACH
AMAZING
KIDS

Simple questions can lead to big conversations!
When we listen to children, we show them that their
ideas, feelings, and choices matter.

LISTEN
SUPPORT
ENCOURAGE
EMPOWER
BELONG

"What would you
like to play today?"



"Which book
should we read?"



"How are you
feeling today?"



"What do you think
will happen next?"



"What would you
like to learn about?"



"Can you tell me
about your picture?"



"What is your favorite
part of our classroom?"



"How can we make
our classroom
even better?"



Teacher
Tip:

- ♥ For children who are still developing language, provide pictures, gestures, objects, or two simple choices so they can participate without needing a long verbal response.
- ♥ Listen carefully, give children enough time to respond, and show genuine interest in what they communicate.

Every
child has
something
important
to say!

Be
Kind
Be Brave
Be You

Be
Kind
Be Brave
Be You

♥ Every Little Voice Matters! ♥

Listen ♥ Include ♥ Respect ♥ Encourage ♥ Empower

BRIGHT
CHILDREN
BRIGHTER
FUTURES



Why Do Kids Break Toys and Act Destructive During Play Time?

Curious Kids Bright Futures!

Understanding the reasons helps us respond with patience, guidance, and positive support.

Common Reasons Preschoolers Break Toys or Are Destructive

1. Exploring and Experimenting



Young children are natural scientists. They explore how things work by touching, pulling, dropping, and taking things apart.

2. Developing Fine Motor Skills



Children are still learning how to use their hands gently and with control. Sometimes they use too much force without meaning to.

3. Curiosity



They want to know "what's inside" or "what will happen if...?" Curiosity can lead them to open, pull, or take things apart.

4. Big Feelings



Frustration, anger, excitement, or being overwhelmed can lead to throwing, hitting, or breaking toys.

5. Lack of Impulse Control



Preschoolers are still learning to stop, think, and make good choices. They often act first before considering the consequences.

6. Seeking Attention



Sometimes children destroy toys to get a reaction from adults or peers — even if the attention is negative.

7. Imitating Others



Children may copy what they see older children or adults do.

8. Overstimulation



Too much noise, activity, or excitement can make it hard to stay regulated, leading to rough or destructive play.

9. Testing Boundaries



They may break toys to see what is allowed and what is not.

10. Normal Development



Some destructive behavior is a normal part of growing, learning, and understanding cause and effect.

What Adults Can Do

- ✓ Stay calm and respond with understanding.
- ✓ Teach gentle hands and model how to play with toys.
- ✓ Set clear expectations and consistent limits.
- ✓ Provide age-appropriate, durable toys.
- ✓ Offer safe ways to explore, such as building, stacking, and sensory play.
- ✓ Give positive attention when they play gently.
- ✓ Help them name their feelings and offer strategies to calm down.
- ✓ Redirect to another activity when needed.
- ✓ Praise and encourage positive choices.

Remember...



- ♥ Young children are learning, not trying to be bad.
- ♥ Mistakes are part of the learning process.
- ♥ Every behavior is a form of communication.
- ♥ With patience, guidance, and positive support, children learn to make better choices.
- ♥ Safe, supportive environments help children feel secure and successful.

Little Learners Make a Big Difference!

By Retired Teacher
Ronnette Curls ♥

Listen ♥ Encourage ♥ Guide ♥ Grow