

RESPECT RESET:

**Restorative Transformation
for Classrooms in One
Meeting**

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INTRODUCTION

It's possible to reset respect in a class and change the trajectory of the entire school year. You can do it in one meeting. I know because I have done it, many times, at my middle school in Brooklyn. It was my job to restore kindness, connection, belonging, and community when it seemed impossible. It was always possible. You just need to invite all the stakeholders to a meeting that I call a Respect Reset and follow a proven formula. Here is how you do it:

1. **INTRODUCTION:** State the purpose of the meeting, your desire to help, and that you will facilitate a collective discussion about how to change the classroom climate so everyone can experience more success and satisfaction.
2. **CIRCULAR SEATING:** Start the class by moving all the chairs into a circle so that everyone can see each other.
3. **GROUP AGREEMENTS:** Propose a set of agreements and ask if they work for everyone. If they don't, discuss what to add or subtract to the agreements. This democratic discussion is a major positive step in restoring respect.
4. **PERSONAL VALUE SHARE:** Do a "Go around" where each person in the circle shares a value that is important to them. By doing this, everyone will be seen and heard.
5. **ICEBREAKER TO BUILD FUN & HOPE:** Lead a fun experiential game to build hope that students can have a different classroom experience.
6. **ICEBREAKER REFLECTION:** Lead a discussion about what values were demonstrated during the game and how this can be applied to improving the class culture.
7. **CLASS CLIMATE ASSESSMENT:** Pose two questions to the class for the next "Go around."
 - a) What is going well in the class?
 - b) What needs to be improved?

8. **BRAINSTORMING ABOUT IMPROVEMENTS:** Facilitate a discussion about how to improve the culture in the class. Paraphrase every idea so that everyone's voice is validated.
9. **CONSENSUS ON NEXT STEPS:** Based on what you hear from the class, offer suggestions for actions to take and seek consensus from the group about what they want to do.
10. **CLOSING:** Lead a closing "Go around" where everyone shares something they liked or appreciated.

The "Respect Reset" works. Why?

- Student knowledge and experience are validated.
- Students are actively participating.
- Questions guide deep reflection.
- Connection is created.
- Hope is generated.
- Students feel a sense of agency for improving their class culture.

Reset Respect sets a new trajectory for classroom culture and success. By implementing the steps outlined in the book, educators can restore hope, positivity, and connection in their classrooms. Whether you are a seasoned educator or just starting out, the Reset Respect formula provides a blueprint for bringing respect back to your community so that everyone can succeed and flourish.

WHAT, WHY, AND HOW

What is a *Reset Respect*?

The *Reset Respect* is a formula for facilitating a meeting that empowers students to take responsibility and accountability for the classroom climate and seek a solution that works for everyone.

Why have a *Reset Respect*?

The *Reset Respect* is useful when a classroom is mired in disrespect and traditional methods for improving the classroom climate have not worked.

How is a *Reset Respect* different from other interventions?

Traditional Classroom Interventions	Reset Respect
Top down	Bottom up
Shame-based	Needs-based
Punitive	Restorative
Didactic	Dialectical and experiential
Starts with stating what's wrong	Starts with modeling and experiencing respect
Demands behavioral improvements	Facilitates a student-generated action plan for improving the class culture

What if I don't know how to lead a *Reset Respect*?

You don't have to be perfect. An imperfect session will still generate positive impactful results. And like every craft, you will get better every time you lead it.

How much time should the meeting take?

45 minutes. If the meeting needs more time, simply pick up where you left off at a later date.

What do I do after I complete a Respect Reset meeting?

Respect and disrespect is contagious. The Reset Respect sets a respectful trajectory, but it is crucial for all members of the community to follow up on their commitments, lest disrespect seeps back into the classroom culture. Teachers need to help students track and nurture their plan of action. They will need incentives to choose to be respectful. Ideally, you can have weekly meetings to connect, celebrate, and develop skills using a SEL curriculum. I suggest starting with 50 SEL Lessons Vol. I.

How do I handle student frustration with a teacher who is not at the meeting?

Most meetings include students expressing frustration with one or more of their teachers. There are a few options. One of my norms is to speak without blame, but very few people are able to do this. I either establish a rule that you can't talk about a person who isn't present, or I help students rephrase their words to model successful communication. I like to use this topic as an opportunity to discuss what you can and can't change, as well as examine one's personal responsibility in communicating with someone in authority. It is a crucial life lesson.