



## Include Students in the Learning Process

### CREATING SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

In supportive learning environments, students feel physically and emotionally safe to explore new ideas, make mistakes, and celebrate successes. Creating class structures, including routines and clear expectations, can help students know how they are expected to behave and what those actions are likely to generate in terms of responses such as grades or consequences. Furthermore, by acknowledging challenges, students can feel supported as they work through difficult concepts or skills. Finally, feedback in the form of praise and constructive ideas can encourage students to continue to put forth their best effort or adjust to meet the set standards. Each of these components can help address students' emotional needs within a class and allow for greater learning to take place.

### EXPECTATIONS AND STANDARDS

#### EXPECTATIONS AND ROUTINES

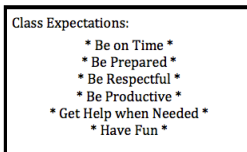
Creating class expectations and norms with students can help them take ownership of the class. Agendas and routines can create structure that allows students to predict the flow of class and lower their anxiety about what will come next. Norms around language and behavior can address issues of emotional safety and help decrease the occurrences in which students feel picked on by others or out of place. Be sure to post these expectations or hand out a copy of the agreed upon norms, so that both teachers and students can refer to them when issues arise.



For more information on reference tools to help create structure and alleviate unpredictability, see our *Spotlight* on activation routines at:  
[http://landmarkoutreach.org/sites/default/files/spotlight/1EF\\_RFActivation.pdf](http://landmarkoutreach.org/sites/default/files/spotlight/1EF_RFActivation.pdf)

#### CONSISTENT STANDARDS

In addition to creating norms for the class, be sure to follow through on any consequences or rewards for incomplete or late work, inappropriate behavior or language, and superb actions. Without consistency, students find it easier to get away with actions, and others can feel targeted and unsupported. Similarly, a lack of positive results when students meet or exceed the expectations of the class can lead them to stop trying. It is also important to be clear that there are times when extenuating circumstances warrant modification of the consequence—thus, students will not be surprised by teachers' actions and think they are being biased or unfair.





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & FEEDBACK

### ACKNOWLEDGE CHALLENGES



Students often feel like they are the only one who is having difficulty. Acknowledge challenges, point out common misconceptions, and let students know that they, too, can succeed in the class. In addition to these general difficulties, work with students to determine what their learning style is, what feels difficult, and what they might need to be successful. Through collaboration, students learn that they have the support of their teacher and that together they will be able to strategize to overcome difficulties.

To learn more about different types of learners and help students determine their styles and goals, see our *Spotlight* on learning styles: <http://landmarkoutreach.org/publications/spotlight/diagnosticprescriptive-teaching>

### GIVE CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK AND PRAISE

Rubric for:				
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Grammar and Punctuation				
Use of New Vocabulary				
Clear Thesis Statement				

In addition to helping students approach difficult tasks with the right mindset, provide feedback as they work through and complete assignments and activities. Instead of simply putting a grade on a paper, give constructive feedback on what they did well and where they can improve for the future. Rubrics can not only help students know what a teacher expects from them, but can also help a teacher give feedback related to the learning goals they have set for students. This feedback should be specific, supportive, and timely.

For more information on giving feedback, see Bryan Goodwin and Kirsten Miller's 2012 article in *Educational Leadership*, "Research Says / Good Feedback is Targeted, Specific, Timely."

### HOW DOES THIS INCLUDE STUDENTS?

- Setting standards, addressing learning styles, and providing opportunities for collaborative feedback can address students' emotional needs so that they are better able to focus on the cognitive demands of learning.