



SELF-AWARENESS

The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.

As an after-school practitioner, whether you're working directly with children or running a program, the self you bring to work will determine the type of day you're going to have. There are significant school-based hot topics that are driving the need to be aware of the "self" we bring to work:

School Culture: Refers to the quality and character of school life. School climate is based on patterns of students', parents' and school personnel's experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures.

School Climate: Generally refers to the beliefs, perceptions, relationships, attitudes, as well as written and unwritten rules that shape and influence every aspect of how a school functions, but the term also encompasses more concrete issues such as the physical and emotional safety of students, the orderliness of classrooms and public spaces, or the degree to which a school embraces and celebrates racial, ethnic, linguistic, or cultural diversity.

SELF-AWARENESS INVENTORY

Take a moment to reflect on how your "self" showed up to work this week. Stay Self-Aware!

SKILL	Did this show up at work this week?			Comment or Note
Meeting deadlines	YES	NO	NA	
Expressing yourself verbally	YES	NO	NA	
Being dependable	YES	NO	NA	
Staying focused/Attention to detail	YES	NO	NA	
Expressing yourself in writing	YES	NO	NA	
Listening	YES	NO	NA	
Staying Accountable	YES	NO	NA	
Mentally prepared before class	YES	NO	NA	
Demonstrating patience/empathy	YES	NO	NA	
Remaining Organized	YES	NO	NA	
Making decisions	YES	NO	NA	
Solving problems	YES	NO	NA	
Working as part of a team	YES	NO	NA	
Responding Constructively to Stress	YES	NO	NA	
Being motivated	YES	NO	NA	
Leading others	YES	NO	NA	
Arriving on time	YES	NO	NA	

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

Young People Must Learn:

- **TO BE PRODUCTIVE:**

to engage positively and do well in school,
to use their spare time well and take care of their basic needs

- **TO BE CONNECTED:**

to form attachments and have supportive
relationships with adults and peers, to identify with a
larger community

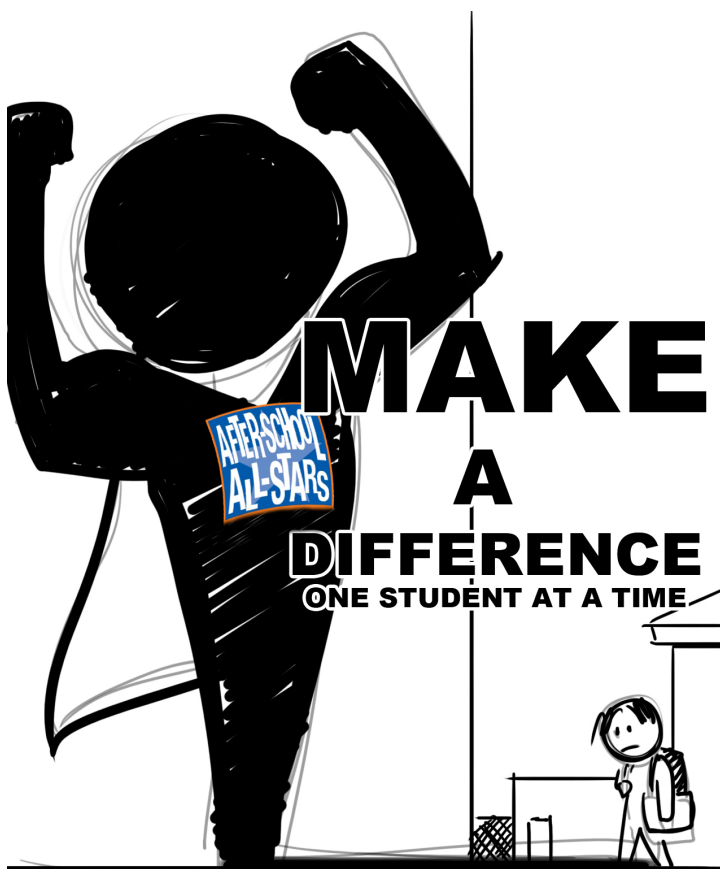
As the picture below illustrates, your students will be at various emotional stages throughout the day, nevermind weeks and months of the year. Be prepared to keep students connected to you, their peers, the program, and their overall school community! The more that students push you away and rebel against you, the more they need your effort in keeping them connected!



YOUTH DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES (CONT.)

TO NAVIGATE: through different settings, situations and challenges; this task encompasses learning how to move...

- **Among their multiple worlds**—peer groups, families, schools, neighborhoods—each of which may require different behavior and even language; behaving in ways that are appropriate to the setting
- **Around the pressure** to engage in unhealthy and risky behaviors
- **Through their own transitions**—for example, the transition from being taken care of to taking care of others



It is not too late! You may think that young people want nothing to do with adults! This could not be further from the truth. You can still become a hero to students on your campus!

List three things you can do during the year to be a genuine role model for kids!

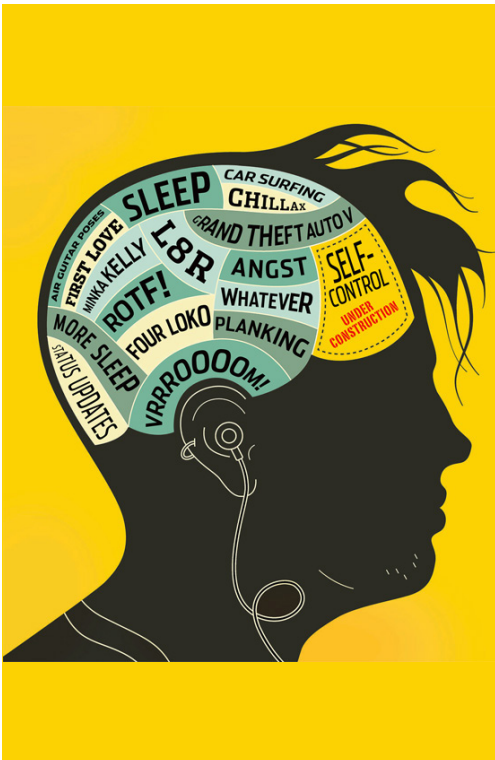
#1: _____

#2: _____

#3: _____

UNDERSTANDING YOUR CLIENT:

The Adolescent Brain



They are dramatic, irrational and scream for seemingly no reason. They have a deep need for both greater independence and tender loving care. There is a reason this description could be used for either teens or toddlers: After infancy, the brain's most dramatic growth spurt occurs in adolescence.

The brain continues to change throughout life, but there are huge leaps in development during adolescence according to Sara Johnson, an assistant professor at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health who reviewed the neuroscience in "The Teen Years Explained: A Guide to Healthy Adolescent Development" (Johns Hopkins University, 2009) by Clea McNeely and Jayne Blanchard.

Though it may seem impossible to get inside the head of an adolescent, scientists have probed this teen tangle of neurons. Here are five things they've learned about the mysterious teen brain.

New Thinking Skills

Due to the increase in brain matter, the teen brain becomes more interconnected and gains processing power. Adolescents start to have the computational and decision-making skills of an adult – if given time and access to information. But in the heat of the moment, their decision-making can be overly influenced by emotions, because their brains rely more on the limbic system (the emotional seat of the brain) than the more rational prefrontal cortex. "This duality of adolescent competence can be very confusing for caretakers. Sometimes teens do things, like punch a wall or drive too fast, when, if asked, they clearly know better.

Intense Emotions

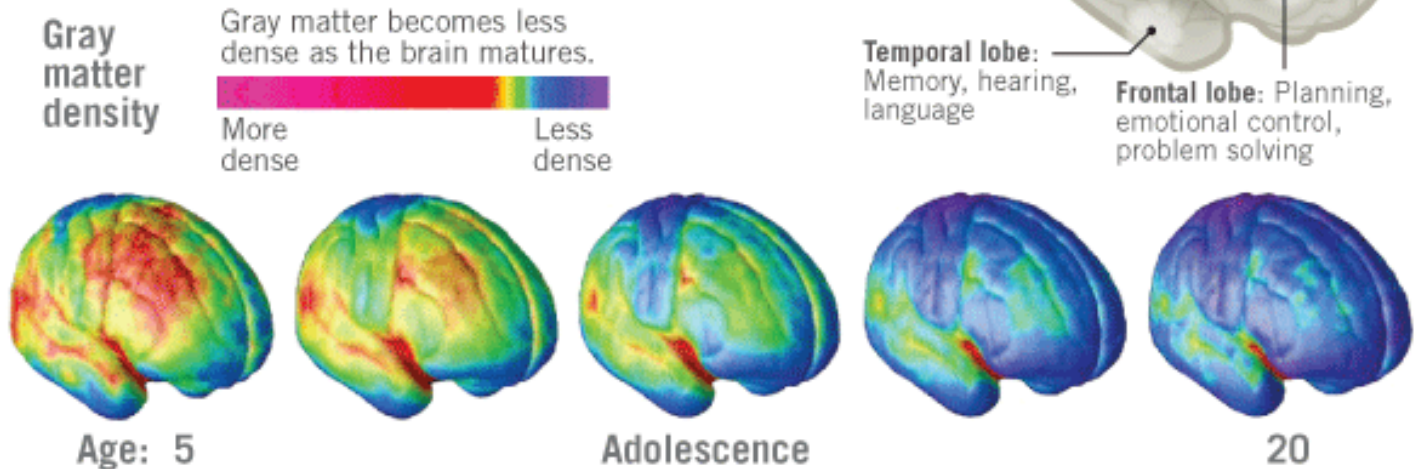
Puberty is the beginning of major changes in the limbic system, the part of the brain that not only helps regulate heart rate and blood sugar levels, but also is critical to the formation of memories and emotions. Part of the limbic system, the amygdala is thought to connect sensory information to emotional responses. Its development, along with hormonal changes, may give rise to newly intense experiences of rage, fear, aggression (including toward oneself), excitement and sexual attraction. Over the course of adolescence, the limbic system comes under greater control of the prefrontal cortex, the area just behind the forehead, which is associated with planning, impulse control and higher order thought.

Peer Pleasure

As teens become better at thinking abstractly, their social anxiety increases. Abstract reasoning makes it possible to consider yourself from the eyes of another. Teens may use this new skill to ruminate about what others are thinking of them. In particular, peer approval has been shown to be highly rewarding to the teen brain, which may be why teens are more likely to take risks when other teens are around. Kids are really concerned with looking cool – but you don't need brain research to tell you that. Friends also provide teens with opportunities to learn skills such as negotiating, compromise and group planning. They are practicing adult social skills in a safe setting and they are really not good at it at first. So even if all they do is sit around with their friends, teens are hard at work acquiring important life skills.

Growing a Grown-up Brain

Scientists have long thought that the human brain was formed in early childhood. But by scanning children's brains with an MRI year after year, they discovered that the brain undergoes radical changes in adolescence. Excess gray matter is pruned out, making brain connections more specialized and efficient. The parts of the brain that control physical movement, vision, and the senses mature first, while the regions in the front that control higher thinking don't finish the pruning process until the early 20s.



Source: "Dynamic mapping of human cortical development during childhood through early adulthood," Nitin Gogtay et al., *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, May 25, 2004; California Institute of Technology

Measuring Risk

The brakes come online somewhat later than the accelerator of the brain. This is in reference to the development of the prefrontal cortex and the limbic system respectively. At the same time, teens need higher doses of risk to feel the same amount of rush adults do. Taken together, these changes may make teens vulnerable to engaging in risky behaviors, such as trying drugs, getting into fights or jumping into unsafe water. By late adolescence, say 17 years old and after, the part of the brain responsible for impulse control and long-term perspective taking is thought to help them reign in some of the behavior they were tempted by in middle adolescence. What are you to do in the meantime? Continue to guide and counsel youth. Like all children, teens have specific developmental vulnerabilities and they need positive adult relationships to limit their behavior.

'I am the center of the universe'

The hormone changes at puberty have huge effects on the brain, one of which is to spur the production of more receptors for oxytocin, according to research detailed in a 2008 issue of the journal *Developmental Review*. While oxytocin is often described as the "bonding hormone," increased sensitivity to its effects in the limbic system has also been linked to feeling self-consciousness, making an adolescent truly feel like everyone is watching him or her. According to McNeely and Blanchard, these feelings peak around 15 years old.

While this may make a teen seem self-centered (and in their defense, they do have a lot going on), the changes in the teen brain may also spur some of the more idealistic efforts tackled by young people throughout history.

It is the first time they are seeing themselves in the world, meaning their greater autonomy has opened their eyes to what lies beyond their families and schools. They are asking themselves for perhaps the first time: What kind of person do I want to be and what type of place do I want the world to be?

Until their brains develop enough to handle shades of gray, their answers to these questions can be quite one-sided, but the job of adult influences is to help them explore the questions, rather than give them answers.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR CLIENT:

Teaching to Gender Differences

What do we know about differences in how girls and boys learn? That they most definitely exist! These differences are more substantial than age differences in many ways. Educational psychologists have found fundamental contrasts in the factors motivating girls vs. factors motivating boys.

Researchers have consistently found that girls are more concerned than boys are with pleasing adults, such as parents and teachers. Most boys, on the other hand, will be less motivated to study unless the material itself interests them. On the following page, you will see a list of tendencies by boys and girls in how they learn. This is not meant to support gender stereotypes, but to provide some context when you observe certain behaviors and interactions in your students throughout the school year. **Just remember, at the end of the day, our approach to supporting our youth either reinforces gender stereotypes or BREAK them. We can help create new possibilities!**

THE **BRAIN** BEHIND **BOYS**

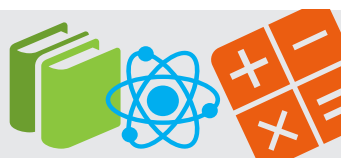
BIG PICTURE & SPATIAL PERCEPTION

THE **BRAIN** BEHIND **GIRLS**

SPECIFIC DETAIL & VERBAL REASONING

THE ABC OF GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

At age 15, **60%** of the lowest achievers in mathematics, reading and science are boys, **40%** are girls.



GIRLS - EVEN HIGH ACHIEVERS - LACK CONFIDENCE IN MATHEMATICS



2 IN 3 GIRLS VS 1 IN 2 BOYS report often worrying that it will be difficult for them in mathematics classes

Around **75%** of girls report reading for enjoyment vs **50%** of boys



GIRLS OUTPERFORM BOYS IN READING IN ALL COUNTRIES



Four times the number of boys as girls consider a career in engineering and computing

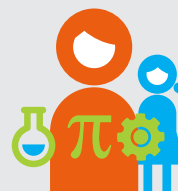
Girls' attitudes vary hugely between countries though.

In science, girls in **Finland** outperform girls in **Estonia**, and yet only **1 in 50 girls in Finland** considers a career in engineering and computing compared to **1 in 9 girls in Estonia**



20% of boys play on collaborative online games every day vs **2%** of girls

IN 6 OUT OF 10 COUNTRIES BOYS CONTINUE TO PERFORM BETTER IN MATHEMATICS THAN THEIR FEMALE PEERS



















PARENTS EXPECT BOYS RATHER THAN GIRLS TO WORK IN A SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING OR MATHEMATICS (STEM) FIELD.

50% of parents in Chile, Hungary and Portugal expect their sons to have a career in a STEM field, whereas only **20%** expect the same for their daughters
















FIND OUT MORE >
The ABC of Gender Equality in Education

www.oecd.org/pisa OECD

Enhancing Teaching 4 Girls!

-  Use puzzles to foster perceptual and symbolic learning.
-  Promote leadership by creating working groups and teams.
-  Verbally encourage girls who exhibit low self-esteem or who underestimate their abilities.
-  Promote physical activities that foster gross motor skills.
-  Use manipulatives, especially in Science and Math.
-  Provide role models of girls succeeding at activities or school subjects normally associated with male success.
-  Provide opportunities for girls to study together.
-  Expect girls to ask for help and want to affiliate with a teacher.
-  If a girl is the “odd one out” of her social group, don’t dismiss it. Ask about her problems and her possible enemies.
-  Don’t shield girls from “skinning their knees”, which might foster a learned helplessness.
-  Promote girls to actively explore their world even at the risk of failure or minor injury.
-  Let girls create their own challenges in which they can take safe risks.
-  Be aware that loud or repetitive noises may distract girls since their hearing is more acute than most boys.
-  Provide role playing activities for girls.
-  Provide an abundance of fiction at a variety of reading levels so that girls have materials they enjoy reading rather than just school content to study.
-  Connect Science and Math to the real world so that girls can understand the relationships between and impact upon people.

Enhancing Teaching 4 Boys!

-  Use manipulatives that require boys to employ fine motor skills.
-  Provide a larger learning space when possible.
-  Make lessons kinesthetic and experiential. Structure activities for movement.
-  Use technology as a learning and teaching tool. Balance study and screen time.
-  Use graphic organizers that compartmentalize concepts into small sections.
-  Keep verbal instructions short. Don’t layer instructions. Write layered instructions as numbered steps on the board or worksheet.
-  Surround boys with reading material they will enjoy, such as real life nonfiction, adventure, sports, or how-to books. Provide a variety of reading levels.
-  Expose boys to a variety of male mentors from many walks of life that illustrate different ways to be successful.
-  Many boys may not hear as well as girls and need to be moved closer to the front of a room.
-  Provide differentiated writing assignments in which girls can write about description, sensory details, feelings and boys can describe events or action.
-  Be aware that boys will continually test their manhood by doing risky actions and that they overestimate their abilities.
-  Boys in groups do stupid things. Begin any new physical activity with lessons from a trained teacher.
-  Boys learn the “rules of the game” through competitive play as this builds camaraderie and organizes their peer relationships. If you don’t, this aggressive drive will show up elsewhere inappropriately.
-  Ask boys about their lives when they want to be alone. Stress tends to cause boys to choose isolation.
-  Provide a moderate level of stress through timing or some sort of challenge to engage a boy’s interest.

ENTERING THE CONTAINER: CO-CREATING CULTURE IN THE LEARNING SPACE

OK, so now we are going to transition to providing you support for the next phase in your relationship with students. You have hustled in an effort to make After-School All-Stars known on your campus. You have promoted your specific class and recruited kids to take part in it. Congratulations! You now have an awesome group of 20 or so youth ready to take it all in! **The second half of the program guide** is all about what takes place in what some of our colleagues in education refer to as “The Container”.

A container can be described as a controlled, specific, and well sealed space. Once sealed, the environment within the container is only affected by what’s inside. The outside world is closed off, and all that is within the container is 100% responsible for what grows and develops. Your class is such a space. You and your students have complete control over the culture and flow of the teaching and learning environment, and it all starts at the entrance to this “container”.

It starts with “HELLO”.



“The ‘meet and greet’ that teachers do before class begins is a critical benchmark for many students.”

It says a lot about you and your willingness to connect with youth when you hang out by the door saying “Hello” and calling students by name. Furthermore, kids say that teachers who “meet and greet” are the ones who also care about them personally, and this personal interest motivates them to do better in class.

It’s easy to assume that this is a common practice, yet, informal polling with students indicates that this is the exception and not the rule. “Meet and greet” doesn’t need to happen every day – two or three times a week is fine. And varying what you do keeps students guessing about what’s going to happen in class on any given day.

5

WAYS TO MEET-AND-GREET

- # 1** In the beginning of the year when you’re trying to match names to faces, ask each student to say her or his name as she or he walks in so that you can hear it and repeat it.
- # 2** Shake hands and say students’ names as they walk in the door. Make sure you connect and that you make eye contact with each student.
- # 3** As students arrive, make comments to individuals that let them know that you notice who they are and what may be different about them:
 - Say something about their appearance - a new hairdo, a cool T-shirt, unusual earrings, a different color finger nail polish, a jacket you like, etc.
 - Ask or comment about things that kids are doing outside of your classroom – sports events, extra curricular activities, other events and projects that students participate in inside and outside of school.
 - Give students positive feedback - about something they’ve done well in class recently.
- # 4** Cut up a bunch of 2” x 2” inch squares and write the numbers from 1 to 10 on different squares. As students come in say hello, and ask them to pick a number from one to ten in your basket that indicates how they’re feeling right now - ten (I’m ready, focused, feeling good) to one (I’m tired, grumpy, and would rather be any place else). When everyone’s seated ask students to hold up their numbers to get a read where people are. You might want to do a quiet energizer that helps everyone to focus.
- # 5** Once a quarter give each student a personal written greeting that mentions something you appreciate about their presence in your class. Alternate weeks for different classes so you create a cycle that you can repeat every quarter. One way to make this less daunting is to put a list of 30 or 40 appreciation responses on your computer. You can write in the students’ names, print out your messages, and cut them into strips.

ENTERING THE CONTAINER: CO-CREATING CULTURE IN THE LEARNING SPACE

By choosing to use your talents and energies in the after school space, you made a decision to enter one of the most unique, and sometimes frustrating, learning environments out there. Why do we say that? **Because of three main reasons:**



Kids don't have to come to after school. They choose to. Now you might argue that parents sign them up to participate in programs like ours because they have to go to work. So by default, they have to come. You won't get an argument from us there. The reality is that, yes, they have to come, but believe you me, they will not be PRESENT even if they do make it out.

Drop in programs merely provide supervision with very little structured programming. Sure, kids come, but they are not invested, and at the same time, the program does not concern itself about whether or not "Johnnie" is gaining mastery in any given discipline, improving his social-emotional skills, preparing for transitioning from one school to another, or thinking about whether or not he's giving back to his community. All of that takes an incredible amount of effort, focus, and patience. These actions are the trademarks of a comprehensive program that is creating a space where kids want to be and want to belong! It's not a given. Your kids do not owe you anything when it comes to attending the program. You have to build a democracy with youth in order to pique their interest and curiosity.

REALITY CHECK: After-School has an element of choice instantly making it a market economy. With that said, below is an overview of the decision making process consumers go through when choosing consumer brands. Check off the ones you should implement in your outreach strategy.

- The Cost / Price - What's the exchange for being in the program. The cost of time / reputation.*
- Discounts, Sales, and Giveaways - People like FREE stuff. So do kids!*
- Visual Appeal / Packaging - What effort are you putting towards the "look" of your program?*
- Bundling - What else comes with being in the All-Stars (cool classes and you get to travel!)*
- Just Noticeable Difference - Something different about All-Stars when compared to school*
- Benefits AND Features / Attributes - All-Stars is about what's good for you AND what's cool!*
- Jingles / Logo - Does our music, our tone, our logo speak to kids?*
- Umbrella Brands - This would be partners. If you get with ASAS, you get the Chicago Bulls!*
- Instant and Easy to Use / Ready Made - Don't make it difficult. Make point-of-entry accessible.*
- Brand Ambassadors - Who's speaking about us? Not just adults, but also kids that have influence.*
- Whether its students that love dance, sports, tech. Our brand is talked about in high places!*

We also know that after school does not always take place in a classroom. So therefore, learning looks different. More specifically, kids want to learn differently in a different setting. Think about when you go to Starbucks or your favorite coffee shop or restaurant. It feels different than home, school, or work. It's neither here nor there. It's the third place, and that does something different to you. Same with kids. Read the article below from Edutopia to see how kids prefer to learn, and be prepared to create that in your learning spaces.



Kids want to learn differently in after school. A while back, I was asked, "What engages students?" Sure, I could respond, sharing anecdotes about what I believed to be engaging, but I thought it would be so much better to lob that question to my own eighth graders. The responses I received from all 220 of them seemed to fall under 10 categories, representing reoccurring themes that appeared again and again. **So, from the mouths of babes, here are my students' answers to the question: "What engages students?"**

Working with their peers

- "Middle-school students are growing learners who require and want interaction with other people to fully attain their potential."
- "Teens find it most interesting and exciting when there is a little bit of talking involved. Discussions help clear the tense atmosphere in a classroom and allow students to participate in their own learning."

Working with technology

- "I believe that when students participate in "learning by doing" it helps them focus more. Technology helps them to do that. Students will always be extremely excited when using technology."
- "We have entered a digital age of video, Facebook, Twitter, etc., and they [have] become more of a daily thing for teens and students. When we use tech, it engages me more and lets me understand the concept more clearly."

Connecting the real world to the work we do/project-based learning

- "I believe that it all boils down to relationships. Not relationships from teacher to student or relationships from student to student, but rather relations between the text and the outside world. For example, I was in a history class last year and my teacher would always explain what happens in the Medieval World and the Renaissance. And after every lesson, every essay, every assignment, he asked us, "How does this event relate to current times?" It brought me to a greater thinking, a kind of thinking where I can relate the past to the present and how closely they are bonded together."
- "If you relate the topic to the students' lives, then it makes the concept easier to grasp."
- "Students are most interested when the curriculum applies to more than just the textbook. The book is there -- we can read a book. If we're given projects that expand into other subjects and make us think, it'll help us understand the information."

Clearly love what you do

- "Engaging students can be a challenge, and if you're stuck in a monotone, rambling on and on, that doesn't help...instead of talking like a robot, teachers should speak to us like they're really passionate about teaching. Make sure to give yourself an attitude check. If a teacher acts like this is the last thing they want to be doing, the kids will respond with the same negative energy. If you act like you want to be there, then we will too."

Get me out of my seat

- "When a student is active they learn in a deeper way than sitting. For example, in my history class, we had a debate on whether SOPA and PIPA were good ideas. My teacher had us stand on either ends of the room to state whether we agree or disagree with the proposition. By doing this, I was able to listen to what all my classmates had to say."

Bring in visuals

- "I like to see pictures because it makes my understanding on a topic clearer. It gives me an image in my head to visualize."
- "I am interested when there are lots of visuals to go with the lesson. Power Points are often nice, but they get boring if there are too many bullet points. Pictures and cartoons are the best way to get attention."

Student Choice

- "I think having freedom in assignments, project directions, and more choices would engage students... More variety = more space for creativity."
- "Giving students choices helps us use our strengths and gives us freedom to make a project the way we want it to. When we do something we like, we're more focused and enjoy school more."
- "Another way is to make the curriculum flexible for students who are more/less advanced. There could be a list of project choices and student can pick from that according to their level."

Understand your clients - the kids

- "Encourage students to voice their opinions as you may never know what you can learn from your students."
- "If the teacher shows us that they are confident in our abilities and has a welcoming and well-spirited personality towards us, we feel more capable of doing the things we couldn't do...What I'm trying to say is students are more engaged when they feel they are in a "partnership" with their teacher."
- "Personally, I think that students don't really like to be treated as 'students.' Teachers can learn from us students. They need to ask for our input on how the students feel about a project, a test, etc. Most importantly, teachers need to ask themselves, 'How would I feel if I were this student?' See from our point of view and embrace it."
- "Students are engaged in learning when they are taught by teachers who really connect with their students and make the whole class feel like one big family. Teachers should understand how the mind of a child or teenager works and should be able to connect with their students because everyone should feel comfortable so that they are encouraged to raise their hands to ask questions or ask for help."
- "Teachers should know that within every class they teach, the students are all different."

Mix it up

- "I don't like doing only one constant activity...a variety will keep me engaged in the topic. It's not just for work, but also for other things such as food. Eating the same foods constantly makes you not want to eat!"
- "Fun experiments in science class...acting out little skits in history...if students are going to remember something, they need visuals, some auditory lessons, and some emotions."
- "Also, you can't go wrong with some comedy. Everyone loves a laugh...another thing that engages me would be class or group games. In Language Arts I've played a game of "dodge ball. We throw words at each other, one at a time. If they could get the definition, the person who threw the word would be out... Students remember the ones they got wrong, and of course, the ones they already knew."

Be Human

- "Don't forget to have a little fun yourself."

After school has always been referred to as a non-traditional learning space. When you think of open or closed systems, after school is completely open and can take place just about anywhere. The experience is not relegated to a classroom or an auditorium. It happens in a gym, on a field, in the cafeteria, or just about any place with a table top. It is fluid and can adapt to the situation at hand. With all of this, after school can be seen as informal and undisciplined. It is our job to change that perception and create a culture by where the learning experience is one of mutual respect and shared curiosity.



Students and teachers alike are mutually accountable in after school. There's a great educator and youth advocate by the name of Christopher Emdin. He is a tenured professor in the Department of Mathematics, Science, and Technology at Teachers College, Columbia University. His brand of teaching and learning comes from what he calls "Reality Pedagogy". In it, he references the Five C's that teachers need to pay attention to in their classrooms:

1. *Co-generative dialogues:* Where teachers and students discuss the classroom and both suggest ways to improve it.
2. *Co-teaching:* Where students get opportunities to learn content and then teach the class.
3. *Cosmopolitanism:* Where students are able to bring in popular culture and ways of being into the classroom. Norms and expressions that are reserved for outside the class, can be brought into it.
4. *Context:* Where the neighborhood and community of the school is seen as part of the classroom.
5. *Content:* Saved for last surprisingly. Where the teacher has to acknowledge the limitations of his/her content knowledge and work to build his/her content expertise with students.

REALITY CHECK: In the spaces below, check off elements that matter to you as facilitator of building a culture that activates a positive learning environment.

- Self-awareness (aware of our thinking and reactions to student behavior).*
- Proactive thinking — Indiscipline will happen at some stage. Be ready for it!*
- Caring and welcoming classroom/teaching and learning space.*
- Classroom/Learning Space layout and resources.*
- High and specific expectations!*
- Rules, routines and procedures!*
- Connecting!*
- Creating a "cue" habit - students responding to your cues (Cue 2 Start).*
- Managing student movement.*
- "With-It-Ness" (awareness of what is going on in all parts of the classroom at all times).*
- Acknowledgment of appropriate behaviour.*
- Opportunities for autonomy and responsibility.*

WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER

Gauging the Temperature in the Room

Now that you have welcomed students to your class or program, with additional insight into what the teaching and learning environment should look like, sound like, and feel like, you are ready to set the tone and co-create expectations for yourself and your students. There is one more thing however!

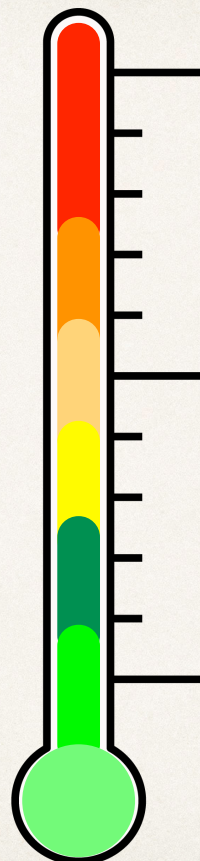
Do not forget that kids are people too!

They walk into your program with life happening to them prior to 3:00 PM. It is critical for you as an educator, coach, mentor, and facilitator to gauge the "mood" of the room or space prior to teaching. As you check in with them upon arrival, develop a process by where they tell you how "they're doing". A simple temperature gauge will give you enough information to guide your approach to the start of the program day.

Below is a thermometer graphic with varying degrees of stress and overall good feelings youth may be experiencing. These are represented by varying degrees. By simply adding a thermometer poster to your classroom, asking kids to take a post-it note and stick it next to where they think their personal temperature is at the point of entry, can tell you lots! A room full of orange and red post-its will require a much different start when compared to post-its in the green-to-yellow range!

Highs & Lows

- ❖ Our internal thermometers are a way of measuring our stress levels
- ❖ They also help us identify how stress feels physically and help us think about what interactions might alter it (either decreasing or increasing in temperature).
- ❖ Ultimately, you will develop strategies for how you can intervene when stress levels are rising.



LOST OUR CONTROL

EMERGENCY

VERY STRESSED

LITTLE FRUSTRATED

UNCOMFORTABLE

CALM

**What's your
status?**



A screenshot of a social media status update form. At the top, there are three icons: a speech bubble for 'Update Status', a camera for 'Add Photo', and a question mark for 'Ask Question'. Below these is a text input field with the placeholder text 'What's on your mind?'. At the bottom of the form, there are icons for a person and a location pin, a dropdown menu set to 'Public', and a blue 'Post' button.

If you want to get a little more “social media” with your pre-instruction check-in, you can always do things like “status updates”, allowing your students to do some self-reflection prior to the start of class.

Up top you will see varying degrees of emotional states. You can make a poster out of this and keep up in your classroom. This allows students to match the graphic of the thermometer with a description of how they are doing.

For students who are coming in at the “stressed” level and beyond, allow for some decompression time before they start dealing with things like homework or group projects.

WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER

Where do you stand? What do you believe?

Alright, both you and the students are in the “container” that is your teaching and learning space (and what we mean by “your” is in reference to both the teacher AND the student. Both own the learning space). You said your hello’s and you’ve gotten a sense of where your students are at mentally and emotionally. You are one step away from establishing the NORMS of the space. These norms will be representative of what you want the learning space to “look like, feel like, and sound like”. These agreements will set the tone for any given program session throughout the school year.

But before you do that, there is one more person you need to deal with -- YOURSELF! It is critical that you deal with your own philosophy about learning. It is damaging to set expectations and agreements without connecting with what matters to you.



Identify your own beliefs about learning!

Here are some tips to get you started on defining your educational philosophy and goals. Complete the following sentence. “A young person’s education should...”

You may find that you have many different types of answers. Although people around you will have their own unique views, the following answers may jump-start your thinking. Many people believe that education should be inclusive of the list below. Check off the topics you identify with:

- Open doors for young people now and in the future.
- Develop a young person’s personality and character.
- Be responsive to a student’s questions, interests, and individual needs.
- Spark curiosity rather than be a source of anxiety.
- Be developmentally appropriate.
- Prepare youth for the 21st-century workforce.

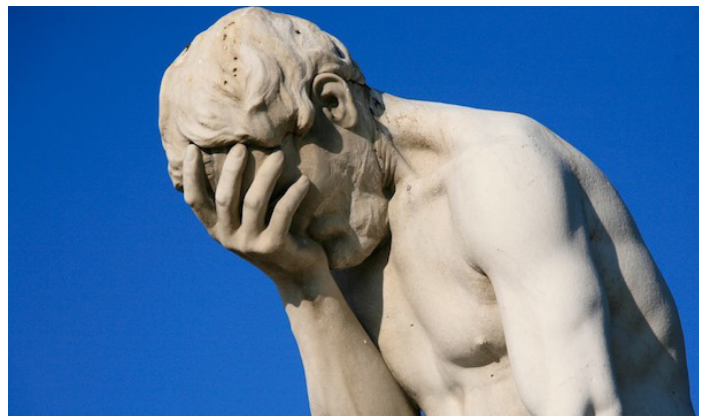
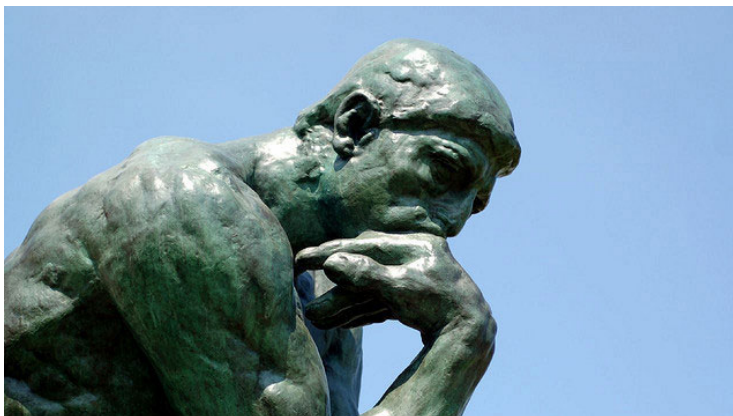
Conduct a personal inventory on learning based on the following questions.

Brainstorm the Past: Try reflecting on your own education. Were there good experiences you'd like to duplicate for your students? Were there unpleasant experiences you hope your students can avoid?

Picture the Future: We often speak about children and young people in our society as “the future.” Depending on your viewpoint, this could mean preservation—or change. What do you think? Do you believe education should equip students to preserve and live in the world as it is? Or do you favor giving children the skills and knowledge they'll need to change the world and construct new possibilities?

Envision the Adult: Another approach involves looking forward. Can you picture the adult you want your students to become? What do you see as being a desirable end or outcome of your students' education?

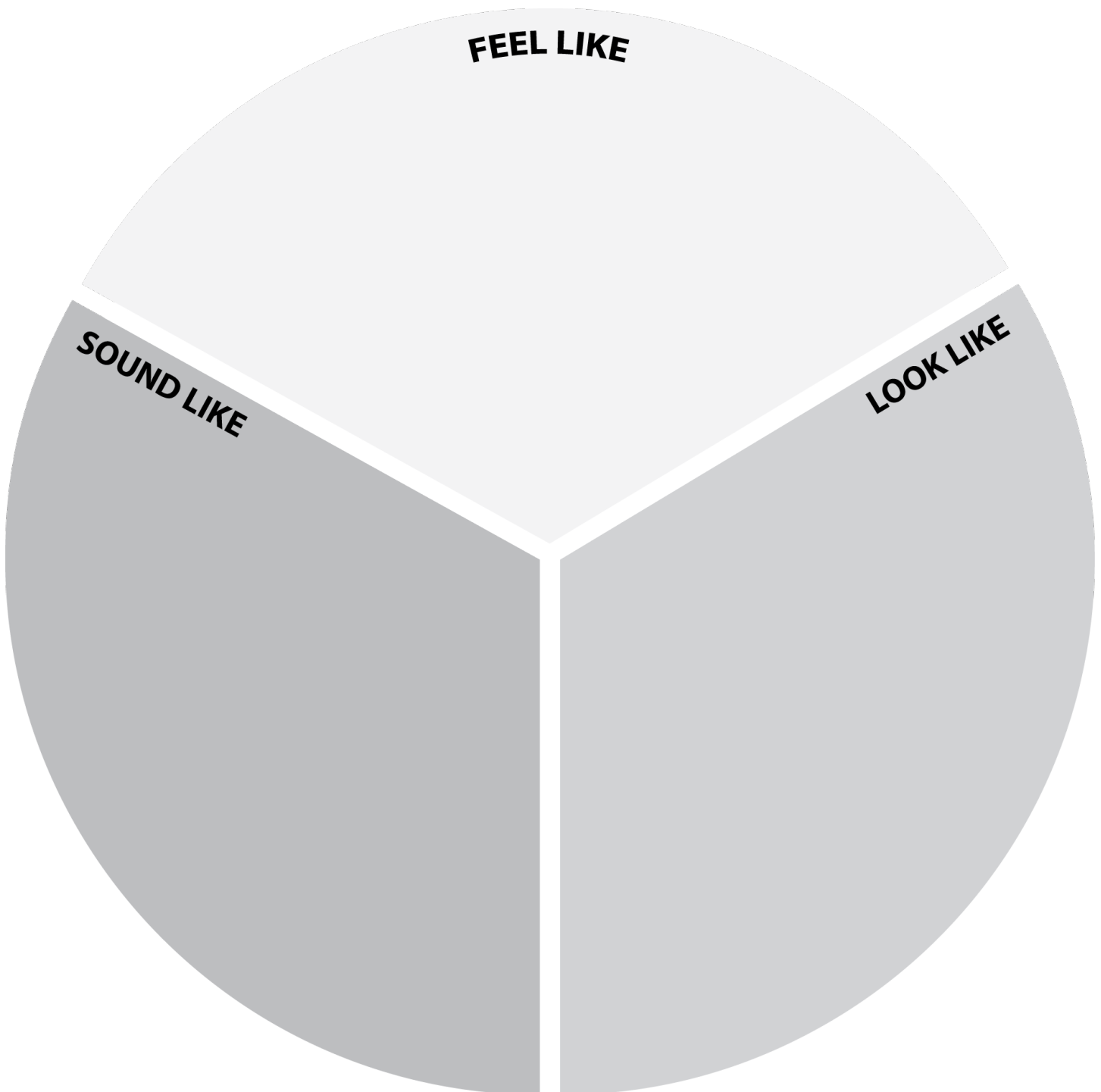
Boil It Down: To make your philosophy easy to remember, try to prioritize your answers and pare your ideas down to the most important three to five points. Now, why not turn your philosophy into a high-impact poster for the learning space—make it a project for your students! Can they create their own mantras for learning?



One thing we know for sure, our approach and beliefs about education should produce curiosity and deep thinking in our youth, not frustration and hopelessness!

CRITICAL REFLECTION

Use this space to breakdown your ideal classroom into three simple elements. During the FIRST WEEK of every new cycle (semester or session), both teacher/program leader and students should fill out this form. You can either recreate this figure on a whiteboard and complete it as a classroom, or have individual students reflect the environment they want to be in!



ENGAGEMENT BEFORE MANAGEMENT

Ask any teacher on your campus and they will tell you that the best strategy for management issues is engaging curriculum and instruction. What you chose to teach and how you teach it drives the type of behaviors that show up in your class!

When you experience frequent management issues in your classroom, first ask yourself: "What is my role in creating this situation? Why are my students not engaged?"

Listed adjacent is an infographic that paints a picture of how engagement shows up in student behavior. We often say that behavior comes from somewhere. It doesn't just show up. This guide will also reconcile with our Class Observation tool. **The goal is for your classroom to be representative of a Highly Engaged Classroom, where the majority of students' behavior reflects High Attention - High Commitment!**

This might sound counterintuitive, but...

**Don't focus on discipline!
Don't focus on classroom management.
Focus on creating and facilitating
LEARNING EXPERIENCES!**

This means having a PRODUCT-BASED CLASSROOM. What does that mean? It means that whatever you decide to teach, whatever your students begin to build, create, or explore equate to having something to show for at the end of a session.

Below, list THREE things you can do, that are tangible and visible, to inspire youth to learn and discover new things during their time with you.

#1: _____

#2: _____

#3: _____

LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

According to Phillip Schlechty, there are five ways that students respond or adapt to school-related tasks and activities.



ENGAGEMENT

HIGH ATTENTION - HIGH COMMITMENT

The student associates the task with a result or product that has meaning and value for the student. The student will persist in the face of difficulty and will learn at high and profound levels.



STRATEGIC COMPLIANCE

HIGH ATTENTION - LOW COMMITMENT

The task has little inherent or direct value to the student, but the student associates it with outcomes or results that do have value to the student (such as grades). Student will abandon work if extrinsic goals are not realized and will not retain what is learned.



RITUAL COMPLIANCE

LOW ATTENTION - LOW COMMITMENT

The student is willing to expend whatever effort is needed to avoid negative consequences. The emphasis is on meeting the minimum requirements. The student will learn at low and superficial levels.



RETREATISM

NO ATTENTION - NO COMMITMENT

The student is disengaged from the task and does not attempt to comply with its demands, but does not try to disrupt the work or substitute other activities for it. The student does not participate and learns little or nothing from the task.

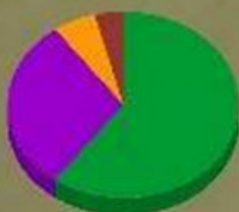


REBELLION

DIVERTED ATTENTION - NO COMMITMENT

The student refuses to do the work, acts in ways to disrupt others, or substitutes tasks and activities to which he or she is committed. Student develops poor work sometimes negative attitudes towards formal education and intellectual tasks.

The Highly Engaged Classroom



The Well Managed Classroom



The Pathological Classroom

