

this is  
very  
helpful!

I wonder

I didn't  
know  
that....

I have a  
question  
about...

This  
makes me  
think  
that...

## **EDUCATE students about their behavior.**

- *I heard what you said. And what I know about the words you are using is that they have been used to oppress people.*
- *Let's make this a safer space. Everyone deserves to be safe.*
- *The only thing you can tell about someone from looking at them is your own bias toward people who look like them.*
- *Intent does not negate impact. Can you consider that what you said/did may be perceived as prejudice, which is hurtful?*

This is a fantastic  
list--I am going to  
copy it and share it  
with my teaching  
team

I wonder...

# CHANGE or STOP negative behavior

I didn't know that....

- *What you said is not acceptable in the safe space we are creating together; please find other ways to express your opinion.*

- *I would like you to stop using that word.*

I have a question about...

- *I am going to interrupt what you are saying because it is offensive to me and to some of your classmates.*

This makes me think that...

- Make a noise or use a word to help stop oppressive language and establish a new starting point. *Examples: No! Nope! No Negativity Allowed! Not Okay! NO Put Downs! Yikes! Eh! Ewww!*

I like the idea of picking a "safe word" for interrupting hurtful language in the classroom



do these conversations happen in private, separate from bigger group?

I wonder...

Kids are also keenly aware of what we say about ourselves and absorb those comments. IE, perfectionism, body image, etc.

I'd know that....

I have a question about...

This makes me think that...

# DO ask. DO tell.

- *I notice you are using negative words about yourself.*
- *I noticed you used the word \_\_\_\_\_. What did you mean by that?*
- *That sounds offensive to me.*
- *It sounds to me that you are uncomfortable with \_\_\_\_\_. Are you? If so, can you tell me why?*
- *While you may not have meant to offend (her, him, they, me), this is what I observed.....*
- *It surprises me that you feel it is OK to comment on other people's (bodies, religion, appearance, skin color, identity, income level, etc.)*
- *What did you mean when you say \_\_\_\_\_?*
- *Can you imagine how what you said can be hurtful?*
- *Will you tell me more of what you meant by that?*
- *Did you know how that word has been used historically?*

## A Dozen Ways to Respond Without Being Bossy or Rude

I wonder...

I didn't know that....

I have a question about...

This makes me think that...

- 1. Talk in a natural tone of voice.** No one likes to be yelled at. Or talk more softly than usual or try singing or speaking in rhyme to break up tension.
- 2. Use I-statements not YOU-statements.** EXAMPLE: Instead of "You shouldn't call each other names;" try "I feel sad when you call each other names because you seemed like such good friends."
- 3. Keep it short & simple.** EXAMPLE: Instead of Jessica, I saw you drop your \_\_\_ on the floor. Now pick it up and put it in the trash. Don't be a litter bug." Try, "Jessica, trash can, please."
- 4. Find something to praise.** EXAMPLE: "Juan, you are a skilled skateboarder, would you be willing to pick up your board and carry it when you're in the hallway to help keep everyone safe?"



# Other ways to respond w/o being rude

Don't do anything to shame or embarrass others.

get excited about every student answer, even if it is not correct

Seriously... keep it short and simple or you run the risk of not just losing one kid, but the entire group.

I wonder

**5. Offer choices.** EXAMPLE: "Keisha, instead of teasing Marcy and her friend, how about you either do this activity, or help me \_\_\_\_\_."

Sometimes, you may give too many choices or the only choice that you want. Make sure either choice is a safe choice.

I did know that....

I love the idea of giving out praise, even for the smallest thing. It's also very helpful in our work setting as well!

**6. Build cooperation.** EXAMPLE: "Luther, I would love for you to focus on this activity we're doing together. Are you willing to talk to Brian after we're done?" Do this without bribery or trickery.

I quickly

Using I statements has been very effective because, even when the kids are acting out, they still generally want your approval, so saying, "It hurts my feelings when you call each other names" really works

**7. Don't judge, describe.** EXAMPLE: Instead of: "Tony, I saw you knock over the teacher's garbage can. That was a mean thing to do, now the trash is all over the floor." Try: "Tony, the teacher's trash ended up all over the floor."

This makes things that

Find something to praise

**8. Give information and let students choose to correct their own behavior.** EXAMPLE: When you talk when I'm trying to give instructions, other students won't be able to hear the instructions clearly."

this is new for me



# ways to respond w/o being rude

It's really not as important that you finish the task but that you create a positive, collaborative experience.

Follow up with the comment "I don't like that?" or "I like that" with "Describe why you like or dislike that"...help them develop and articulate their thoughts and reasoning.

I wonder

parallel conversations can feel much less confrontational and more casual

Try a "parallel conversation" instead of a face-to-face conversation about the student's negative behavior. Do something fun together, i.e., draw pictures, play a game) and take advantage of that time to talk with the student.

I didn't know that....

Notice and exemplify positive behavior. "Zoe, you helped Stella pick up her art supplies when she dropped them. Good going! I want to help like you, too!"

11. Bite your tongue before using any of these phrases (or any other that make students feel small, stupid, defensive or patronized):

I have a question about...

I am in awe of teachers! Especially these days when everyone is likely feeling run down and at their wits end. What are some strategies/tips for keeping a cool head when students are disruptive/hurtful?

- "You always....."
- "You never..."
- "You should never..."
- "You better....."
- "I've told you before..."
- "You should know better than to."
- "Why did you do that?"
- "What were you thinking?"
- "What's wrong with you?"
- "That was a dumb thing to do."

Help them articulate their reasonings when they say "I don't like it" or "I like it"

another to never say- Why are you crying?

This makes me think that...

the teacher in my class room uses a sound bowl when the kids are disruptive and it's SO effective

Wait until you are away from students' earshot to debrief, complain, scream, yell, flail about or pull your hair out. Students can be manipulative and powerful when they want to be, especially when they are dealing with trauma. The root of this behavior is typically a desire for structure and praise, and they naturally will gravitate toward that. Anything you do with a positive intention is AWESOME! Think about a positive goal, tell them about it and let them know how proud you are of them. Remember to congratulate yourself too!