



Second Step® Community Rebuilding Unit

# Kindergarten & Grade 1 Lessons

UPDATED JUNE 2021

Welcome to the Second Step® Community Rebuilding Unit.

This unit is designed to support schools as they re-open after extended school closures. It aligns with Second Step programs, but can also be used by any educator looking to foster a positive school or classroom community.

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## SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

# Second Step<sup>®</sup> Community Rebuilding Unit Kindergarten & Grade 1 Lessons

Lesson	Objectives	Overview
<b>Lesson 1:</b> Meet the Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Say the name of one or more other students in the class</li><li>• Respond to the attention signal</li></ul>	This lesson can help students acquaint themselves with their school community and get to know other students. Having a strong sense of community helps students feel comfortable and confident at school so that they are ready to learn.
<b>Lesson 2:</b> Exploring Classroom Rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Say the class rules</li><li>• Say how it feels to be in a classroom where everyone follows the rules</li></ul>	Rules and routines are essential for classrooms to run smoothly. Communicating rules and routines effectively is an important part of setting clear expectations, reducing students' uncertainty and anxiety, and empowering them to learn while keeping themselves and others safe and happy.
<b>Lesson 3:</b> I Can Feel Better	Name things they can do to feel better when they have strong feelings	As students adjust to the school and classroom environment during the first few weeks, they might experience a range of emotions including anxiety, frustration, or sadness. In this lesson, students learn that everyone has strong feelings and that there are things they can do to feel better.
<b>Lesson 4:</b> My Self-Portrait	Create a self-portrait	Giving students an opportunity to express themselves can help them identify what they have in common with each other and build community. This lesson encourages students to learn more about themselves and each other through art.
<b>Lesson 5:</b> The Same and Different	Identify a way they're like others and a way they're different from others	In this lesson, students continue to explore their similarities and differences with the group. Identifying how they are similar to and different from other kids helps students learn about each other and feel like part of their class community.

## Unit Description

The goal of the Community Rebuilding Unit is to help foster a sense of community among students and staff as they return to school after extended school closures or time away.

To achieve this goal, the Community Rebuilding Unit will have students engage in a variety of activities designed to help them build connections with their peers and school staff. Students will also have opportunities to express what's on their minds, ask questions, and identify what they have in common with each other.

Staff will also receive guidance on how they can help foster a positive school community and provide meaningful support to their students.

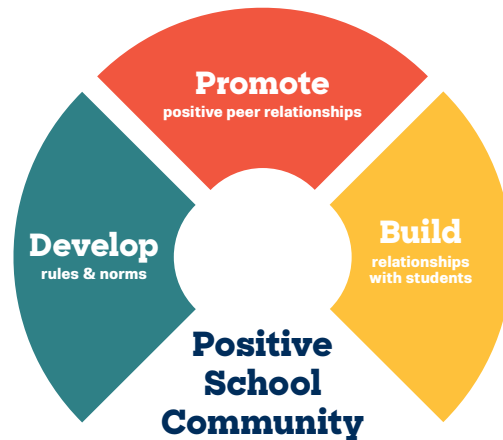
## Why This Unit Matters

After long breaks from school or in-person learning, students can often feel isolated or disconnected from their school community or peers. Rebuilding community after long breaks can help students feel welcomed and supported, and can create a sense of belonging that can positively affect their overall well-being.

## Building a Positive School and Classroom Community

A positive school community feels safe, respectful, welcoming, supportive, and affirming of their own identities, perspectives, and lived experiences.<sup>1</sup> Some ways to build a positive school community:

- Develop clear, fair rules and norms that support respectful behavior
- Promote positive peer relationships
  - **Teach the lessons in this unit**
  - Notice and reinforce positive interactions between peers
- Build positive relationships with all students
  - **Check in regularly with students using the class check-in/check-out templates below**
  - Get to know students and what's happening in their lives outside of school
  - Demonstrate kindness and inclusiveness in your interactions with students
  - Connect with students about their academic progress in a supportive and understanding way
  - Offer additional emotional support to students in need



1. Committee for Children. (2013). *Second Step Bullying Prevention Unit*. [Kit]. Seattle, WA: Committee for Children

- Respond to behaviors in a supportive way
  - Understand that students who have experienced trauma or toxic stress may act out with disruptive behaviors, and that recognizing these behaviors as symptoms of trauma and stress is critical to building a positive school culture
  - Use the steps in "Safe Supportive Learning" on page 19 to help you respond appropriately

## Check-Ins and Check-Outs

### Overview

Making sure a caring adult connects with every student every day is an effective way to build strong student-staff relationships and a positive school environment. Daily check-ins are a practical strategy for facilitating these connections schoolwide. They also serve to identify students who may need more personalized social-emotional support. The weekly check-out provides students with an opportunity to reflect on and process the week.

## Daily Check-In

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will be better able to:

- Identify how they're feeling
- Ask for help with concerns and problems

### Prep/Materials

- Paper and pencil

### Lesson Note

Consider participating in the conversation yourself. When you share how you're feeling, you can help normalize these conversations for students.

If you're able to host digital polls in your classroom, consider adding a second individual check-in as an anonymous poll. It can be very affirming for students to visually see how their peers are responding.

### Group Check-In (10 min.)

1. Set the purpose: **Let's check in on how we're doing.**
2. Have students take turns answering the following questions:
  - **How are you feeling today?** *Happy. Sad. Tired. Excited. Hungry.*
  - **What's something you're looking forward to today?** *Seeing friends. Playing. Learning. Lunch.*
  - **What's something you're wondering about today?** *Following safety rules. Being away from home.*
3. Observe students as they answer. If you're concerned that a student may need extra support, use the Individual Check-In to follow up with them later in the day.



**Bold**—Teacher's script  
*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Individual Check-In (5 min.)

1. Find a time when you can talk with the student privately and ask the following questions:
  - **How are you feeling today?**
  - **Is there anything you'd like me to know?**
  - **Is there anything you need help with?**
2. Acknowledge and affirm students' feelings. Give them space to talk, but do not pry. Contact your school counselor or administrator if you're concerned that the student may need additional support.

## Weekly Check-Out

### Objective

By the end of this activity, students will be able to reflect on their experiences over the last week.

### Lesson Note

As with check-in, consider participating in the conversation yourself. When you share how you're feeling, you can help normalize these conversations for students.

### Group Check-Out (10 min.)

1. Set the purpose: **Let's reflect on how this week went for us.**
2. Have everyone in the class (including you!) briefly answer the following question: **What was the best part of this week?** *I wrote a whole sentence. We celebrated my friend's birthday.*
3. **What's one thing that was hard?** *Learning everyone's names. Waiting my turn.*
4. **What's one thing you want to do this weekend?** *Sleep. See my grandma. Play with my dog.*

## Remote Adaptations

The best adaptations for a lesson will depend on the technology tools available to you and your students, and on your knowledge of what works best for your kids. The following are suggested ways of delivering the lessons remotely. Choose what works best for you and your students.

### Partner Work (Including Turn and Talk)

- Use breakout rooms. Your remote-delivery platform may allow you to create smaller groups for discussion or collaboration. It may be easier to create small groups instead of pairs. To increase effectiveness, keep breakout time fairly short, make sure students are clear on the task before sending them into groups, and consider assigning roles to group members or assigning one student to be the group facilitator. For younger students, it's a good idea to have an adult helper in each breakout room.
- Make it a whole-class discussion. Give think-time, then call on volunteers. Encourage all students to participate by having them indicate when they agree or have the same idea.
- Use the chat window with the whole class. Call on a volunteer to type a response or allow all students to respond.
- Use online discussion boards or other collaborative tools.
- Have students write or draw on paper and share their responses by holding them up to the camera.
- For Kindergarten through Grade 2, have students turn and talk with a stuffed animal, doll, or action figure, or with a family member.

### Whole-Class Discussion

- Establish guidelines for muting and unmuting microphones and for indicating when someone wants to speak.
- Call on a volunteer to respond while other students indicate when they agree or have the same idea.
- Consider having students use nonverbal response methods, such as hand signals or sticky notes, to show when they agree with the speaker or have a different response.
- Encourage students to add on to or make connections with others' ideas. For example, after a student shares an experience, ask the rest of the class to indicate whether they've had the same experience.
- Use online discussion boards or other collaborative tools.
- Have students write or draw on paper and share their responses by holding them up to the camera.

### Physical Movement

- Some lesson activities include hand motions or movements while standing in place. If students have room, these can be done remotely without modification.
- Some lessons ask students to move around the classroom to find a partner. Modify these lessons by assigning partners instead or using the tips in the Partner Work section.

### Lesson Visuals

- Some activities may require students to reference a lesson visual. Display the visual using the screen sharing function of your remote-delivery platform. You may also choose to read prompts to students or post them for students to see.

# Lesson 1: Meet the Class

## Getting Started

### Overview

This lesson can help students acquaint themselves with their school community and get to know other students. Having a strong sense of community helps students feel comfortable and confident at school so that they are ready to learn.



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Say the name of one or more other students in the class
- Respond to the attention signal

### Lesson Note

If your students speak languages other than English, consider having them introduce themselves in both their home language and in English. You'll teach students an attention signal in this lesson. Choose a signal that is quick and easy to use, like raising your hand, clapping in a pattern, or saying 1, 2, 3, eyes on me.

### Remote Adaptations

For students joining class from home: When the class stands in a circle, give the computer a spot in the group by placing it on a desk or table. Give remote learners a chance to introduce themselves, and check that they can hear when other students introduce themselves.

For whole-group remote learning: Play an on-screen name game. Tell students to do various actions when you say their names, such as as: **when I say your name, stand up/touch your nose/say "Hi!"/wave hello.**

### Warm-Up (5 min.)

- 1. Look around at all the students in our class.** Pause so that students can look. **We are a community! A community is a group of people who live, play, or work together. This year, we'll learn, play, and work together as a class.**
- 2. Who else do you live with, play with, or learn with?** Call on a few students. Accept all responses. *I live with my grandma. I play with my friends. I learn with my teacher.* **Those people are part of your community, too.**
- 3. We're going to play a game to learn each other's names. This will help us get to know each other and feel comfortable in our community.**



#### 4. Before we play, let's learn an attention signal.

- **The attention signal tells everyone to stop, look, and listen so I can tell you important information. Here it is.** Select and model an attention signal.
- Practice the attention signal a few times. After giving the signal, wait until you see all students stopping, looking, and listening.

## Activity Instructions

### Activity (10 min.)

1. Have students stand in a circle. **Now, I'll show you how to play the name game. Can someone help me?**
2. Have a volunteer walk to you and tell you their name: *Hi, I'm [name].* Swap places and introduce the student and yourself to the group: **This is [student's name], and I'm [your name].** Then walk to another student in the circle, introduce yourself, and swap places.  
*Tip:* It's important to pronounce each name correctly. Model asking someone to repeat a name or ask, **Did I say that right?** Encourage students to do the same.
3. **When someone stands in front of you, learn their name and swap places. Tell the group both of your names. Then walk to someone else in the circle. You never know when someone will walk to you, so pay attention!**
4. Play the game. If needed, use the attention signal to pause and clarify instructions or help individual students.
5. After everyone has a turn, use the attention signal again. **It's so nice to learn everyone's names! It's okay if you don't remember them all yet. If you forget someone's name, you can always ask them to tell you again.**

### Wrap-Up (5 min.)

1. Have students sit. **Look around our community. Think about a name you learned. On the count of 3 say the name: 1, 2, 3!**
2. **I heard the names of people in our community.** Say a few names.
3. **How does it feel when someone knows your name?** *Good. Happy.* **Why is it important to know your friends' names?** *So you can talk to them. So they know you care about them.*
4. **Learning each other's names can help us feel comfortable and cared for. We'll get to know each other better with other fun activities.**
5. If time allows, play the game again, but have the students say their name and their favorite color.



# Lesson 2: Exploring Classroom Rules

## Getting Started

### Overview

Rules and routines are essential for classrooms to run smoothly. Communicating rules and routines effectively is an important part of setting clear expectations, reducing students' uncertainty and anxiety, and empowering them to learn while keeping themselves and others safe and happy.



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Say the class rules
- Say how it feels to be in a classroom where everyone follows the rules

### Prep

- Post a list of class and/or school rules on poster paper where students can see them during the lesson. Leave space to include any new rules students want to add to the list.

### Lesson Note

Use this lesson to review the attention signal students learned in the previous lesson, as well as to reinforce other classroom rules and routines to help them learn and stay safe. Because introducing too many rules at once can be overwhelming, focus on three to five new rules, like "Be safe," "Be kind," and "Care for our classroom."

**Warm-Up (5 min.)**

- 1.** In our last lesson, we learned that a community is a group of people who live, play, or work together, and we learned each other's names. We also learned an attention signal.
- 2.** Give the attention signal. Wait for kids to respond. **Paying attention helps us learn new things.**
- 3.** Today we'll learn about another important part of our community: the class rules. Rules tell us how to behave so we can learn and stay safe. We'll learn our class rules, and we'll learn what it looks like and sounds like to follow them.
- 4.** We already know lots of rules. **What rules do you follow at home?** *No running inside. Bedtime is at 7:00 p.m. No snacks before dinner.* **At school?** *Listen to the teacher. Be kind. Treat books gently.* **When playing outside?** *Take turns. Share toys. Play safely.*
- 5.** Rules can be different depending on where you are. Give an example based on what kids have said. For example, **"At recess we can run, but inside, we have to walk."** **In our classroom, we have rules that help us stay safe so we can learn and have fun together.**

**Activity Instructions****Activity (8 min.)**

- 1.** Show students the classroom rules poster. **First, I'll read each rule. Then you'll repeat the rule.** Read each rule and have students repeat them.
- 2.** Read the rules again. This time, after each rule, ask the following questions: **What does that look like? What does it sound like?** Have students give examples. *Being kind looks like sharing. Being kind sounds like saying please and thank you.*
- 3.** Have students stand up behind their seats. **Let's come up with actions to help us remember the rules.** Say each rule and call on a volunteer to suggest a corresponding action. Give a few examples to help students get started, for example, "Be kind: pat yourself on the back" or "Be safe: give yourself a hug."
- 4.** Once students can recall most of the actions, you can challenge them by:
  - Saying the rules out of order
  - Doing the movements and having students call out the rules
  - Having volunteers say the rules

**Discuss (5 min.)**

1. Have students sit. **How do you feel when everyone follows our class rules? When you think of a feeling, hold up one finger.**
2. Give students 5 seconds of think-time. Count down with your fingers to show the time remaining.
3. Call on students to tell the class their feelings. *Safe. Happy. Able to learn.*

**Tip:** Use positive reinforcement whenever you notice students following the rules. **Thank you for picking up that piece of paper and recycling it. Taking care of our space is one of our class rules.**

**Wrap-Up (2 min.)**

1. Today you learned our classroom rules. You've helped our community! We'll follow these rules as we learn and play together.
2. Using our new actions, show me which rule you want to remember and follow today. Have students show an action.

# Lesson 3: I Can Feel Better

## Getting Started

### Overview

As students adjust to the school and classroom environment during the first few weeks, they might experience a range of emotions including anxiety, frustration, or sadness. In this lesson, students learn that everyone has strong feelings, and that there are things they can do to feel better.



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Name things they can do to feel better when they have strong feelings

### Prep

- Designate a "quiet corner" in your classroom where students can go to take a break.

### Lesson Note

Feel free to use a puppet, stuffed animal, or doll to model the emotions and actions rather than acting them out yourself.

### Warm-Up (5 min.)

- 1. Clap once if it's been a long time since you've been to school.** Students respond. **Wiggle your fingers if this is your first time coming to school.** Students respond. **When you do something for the first time, or for the first time in a long time, you can have strong feelings!**
- 2. Everybody has strong feelings sometimes. Sometimes we feel happy and excited. Other times we might feel sad or even mad. Other times we feel silly. When we have strong feelings, we can do things to feel better.**
- 3. Tell students what you do to feel better, like taking a break or exercising. What do you do to feel better when your feelings get really big?** *Hug my teddy bear. Get a drink of water.*
- 4. You're going to pretend to act out some ways to feel better when you have strong feelings.**



## Activity Instructions

### Activity (10 min.)

1. Have students stand. **I'll show you how.** Act out the emotions and corresponding actions and have students follow along after you. **When I feel happy, I jump up and down.**
2. **Now it's your turn. Show me you're feeling happy.**

*Tip:* Pretend play comes naturally to young children and gives students an opportunity to try something new in a low-stakes, fun way.

3. **When I'm feeling silly, I dance around and shake!** Have students show their silly dance.

**When I get too excited, I stop and take a break.** Have students stop and rest.

**When I'm in a new place with new people, sometimes I feel scared or lonely.** Act out feeling nervous and scared. **Show me what it looks like when you feel that way.**

**When we feel scared and lonely, it helps to tell someone. Like this: "I'm feeling scared and lonely."**

**Now you try saying it. "I'm feeling scared and lonely."** Students repeat.

**Whenever you have strong feelings here at school, you can always tell me or another grown up, so we can help you.**

**When I need some space to myself, I can come to the quiet corner.** Walk to the designated quiet corner and sit quietly for a few moments. **This is the quiet corner for our classroom. You can come here anytime you need some quiet time and space.**

### Wrap-Up (5 min.)

1. Have students sit. Use the attention signal. **What are some things we learned that can help when we have strong feelings?** Call on students to respond. *Take a break. Tell someone. Go to the quiet corner.* **If you think you can try those things when you have strong feelings, clap your hands.** Students respond.
2. **Everybody has strong feelings sometimes. You can always tell me if you need help with your strong feelings. Then we'll work together to help you feel better.**

# Lesson 4: My Self-Portrait

## Getting Started

### Overview

Giving students an opportunity to express themselves can help them identify what they have in common with each other and build community. This lesson encourages students to learn more about themselves and each other through art.



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Create a self-portrait
- Identify a way they're like others and a way they're different from others

### Prep

- Draw a quick self-portrait on a piece of paper. Include elements that show who you are, like your pet or something you like to do.

### Lesson Note

Students may want or need more time to create their self-portraits. Consider extending the time or spending another session on this activity.

### Warm-Up (5 min.)

- 1.** Show students your self-portrait. **This is my self-portrait. A self-portrait is a picture that you draw of yourself. A self-portrait shows who you are!**
- 2.** Today you'll make self-portraits to help you see ways you are the same and different. This will help you get to know each other.
- 3.** Start by thinking about what you might put in your self-portrait. **You can include yourself and anything that shows who you are!** Model by thinking aloud about what you put in your self-portrait (I drew my curly hair, my nose, and my mouth. **Here is my pet fish!**). **What will you put in your self-portrait? When you have three ideas, hold up three fingers.** Wait for most students to have three ideas.



## Activity Instructions

### Activity (10+ min.)

1. Let's get started! Remember: a self-portrait shows who you are. It doesn't have to look perfect! Hand out art supplies.
2. Give students at least 10 minutes to work. Walk around the room to encourage students' artistic choices. Remind or help them write their names on their self-portraits.

### Wrap-Up (5 min.)

1. Use the attention signal, then have students clean up. Help by telling them where materials go.
2. Gather students and have them hold their self-portraits at their chests. **Look at everyone's self-portraits. How are we the same and different?** Model responses. **One way these students are the same is that they both have glasses. One way these students are different is that one has short hair and the other has long hair.**

*Tip:* If a student responds inappropriately (*She's wearing a weird hat*), use it as a teachable moment to highlight the value of differences. **Our differences aren't good or bad. They're just part of what makes each of us special.**

*Tip:* It's important to respond neutrally to what students notice. **It's so interesting to notice what's the same. What a fascinating way to be different.**

3. **It's your turn. Look around at the self-portraits. How are you the same?** Give students three seconds of think-time. Count down with your fingers to show the time remaining. Have a few students answer. *We both have noses. Tiana drew a dog, and so did I.*
4. **How are you different?** Give students think-time, then have a few students answer. Accept all responses. *My hair is long, and David's isn't. Gabrielle drew a basketball and I drew my mom.*
5. **It's interesting to learn the ways we are the same and different. We'll keep getting to know each other all year.**
6. If possible, post the self-portraits where students can see them.

# Lesson 5: The Same and Different

## Getting Started

### Overview

In this lesson, students continue to explore their similarities and differences with the group. Identifying how they are similar to and different from other kids helps students learn about each other and feel like part of their class community.



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify a way they're like others and a way they're different from others

### Prep

N/A

### Lesson Note

N/A

### Warm-Up (1 min.)

1. We're learning about ways we're the same and ways we're different. Today we'll play a motion game about ways we're the same and different.





## Activity Instructions

### Activity (10 min.)

- 1. If you like to dance, clap your hands.** Students respond. **Everyone who clapped likes to dance!**
- 2. I'll say the ABCs. When I say the first letter of your name, clap. Try to notice who else claps at the same time. Say the alphabet.** Help kids notice when to clap. For example, "Omar, it's your turn to clap since your name starts with O."
- 3. If someone clapped at the same time as you, raise your hand. It's okay if you didn't notice. If your hand is up, your name starts with the same letter as someone else. If nobody clapped at the same time as you, your name starts with a different letter than everyone else.**

*Tip:* Talk about things that are the same or different in a neutral way. You could say something like "Chloe and Cal have names that start with the letter C. That's the same. Bryn and David's names start with different letters."

- 4. Now I'll count. When I get to the number that tells how old you are, wiggle your body.** Count to 10. Remind the kids when to wiggle. **You're the same age as the other kids who wiggled. I didn't wiggle, because my age is different.**

*Tip:* Keep an eye out for any kids who are not participating. Rather than calling on them in front of the group, check in with them later to see how they're feeling and offer reassurance as needed.

- 5.** Continue playing with new categories as time allows.

### Wrap-Up (4 min.)

- 1. It's interesting to learn ways we are the same and different. Think about some of the ways you were different. Put your hand on your head when you've thought of a way you were different from others.** Give students three seconds of think-time. Count down with your fingers to show the time remaining. Call on a few kids to share what they learned. *Bo and I are different because his name starts with B and mine starts with C.*
- 2. Think about some of the ways you were the same. Touch your elbow when you've thought of a way you were the same as others.** Give three seconds of think-time. Call on a few kids to share what they learned. *Lily and I both like dolphins! All the kids are 5 or 6.*

**When we find out more ways we're the same and different, it helps us learn about each other and feel like part of our community.**

# Next Steps

Completing this unit is just the first step to building community with your students. Here are some steps to continue building a safe and supportive classroom community:

- 1. Continue Check-Ins.** Checking in with your students lets them know you care about their lives in and outside of school, and can help them feel valued and supported.
- 2. Review and revise your classroom rules or norms.** Taking time to review the agreed upon rules or norms can help remind students how they want their community to run and feel. Any time new problems arise in the classroom, have a discussion about the rules or norms and revise them as needed.
- 3. Revisit activities.** Your students' interests, hobbies, values, thoughts, and feelings can change over time. Revisit activities after a long break from school or to help introduce new students to your classroom community.
- 4. Reinforce connections.** Look for opportunities to remind students what they've learned about each other and notice when students are using new skills they've learned in this unit. Skills like asking questions, being curious about others' interests and values, and recalling new things they've learned about others can help students continue to grow their classroom community.
- 5. Implement Second Step® Elementary and Second Step® Middle School.** The skills and concepts taught throughout the Second Step® programs will provide students with valuable social-emotional support throughout the year.



# Safe Supportive Learning

When students are coming back after a long period of time, they may struggle to follow the class rules. It can be difficult to know the right thing to do, especially when you're trying to model social-emotional skills. Follow these steps to respond appropriately.

## Self-Check

It's important to feel calm so that you can respond to a student's behavior in a supportive way. Choose an emotion-management strategy that works for you, like slow breathing and relaxing your body, so that you can feel calm. When students see you using social-emotional skills and emotion-management strategies, they will learn to value these skills.

## Student Check

Do a Student Check to help you reframe a student's behavior so you can understand what the behavior is telling you. Thinking of the behavior through a supportive frame rather than a corrective frame can help you respond appropriately and avoid blaming or punishing students for their behavior.

### Corrective Frame

This student is a problem.  
What's wrong with this student?  
I need to correct this student's behavior.

### Supportive Frame

What is this student experiencing in his or her life?  
What is this student trying to say with his or her behavior?  
I need to support this student.

## Respond

Once you've done the **Self-Check** and **Student Check**, you're ready to **respond** to a student's behavior in a supportive way by:

- Listening
- Showing empathy
- Providing support