

RELATIONSHIPS

Using Verbal and  
Nonverbal Behaviors  
That Indicate  
Affection for Students

THE **MARZANO COMPENDIUM** OF  
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES



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# INTRODUCTION

In 2007, Dr. Robert J. Marzano published *The Art and Science of Teaching: A Comprehensive Framework for Effective Instruction*. The framework, composed of three lesson segments, ten design questions, and forty-one elements, was based on research showing that teacher quality is one of the strongest influences on student achievement—that is, an effective teacher can positively and significantly impact student learning. As such, *The Art and Science of Teaching* sought to identify specific action steps teachers could take to improve their effectiveness.

In 2015, Dr. Marzano updated *The Art and Science of Teaching* framework to reflect new insights and feedback. The Marzano Compendium of Instructional Strategies is based on this updated model, presenting forty-three elements of effective teaching in ten categories. Each folio in the series addresses one element and includes strategies, examples, and reproducible resources. The Compendium and its folios are designed to help teachers increase their effectiveness by focusing on professional growth. To that end, each folio includes a scoring scale teachers can use to determine their proficiency with the element, as well as numerous strategies that teachers can use to enact the element in their classrooms. Indeed, the bulk of each folio consists of these strategies and reproducibles for implementing and monitoring them, making the Compendium a practical, actionable resource for teachers, instructional coaches, teacher mentors, and administrators.

# USING VERBAL AND NONVERBAL BEHAVIORS THAT INDICATE AFFECTION FOR STUDENTS

When appropriate, the teacher uses verbal and nonverbal behaviors that indicate affection for students. Nonverbal behaviors might include gesturing and smiling, while verbal behaviors might include greeting students by name, joking with students, and giving encouraging remarks. Using such behaviors lets students know that the teacher considers them a valuable part of the classroom community and is invested in their well-being. Furthermore, when students feel valued, they are more likely to remain engaged during class.

## Monitoring This Element

There are specific student responses that indicate this element is being effectively implemented. Before trying strategies for the element in the classroom, it is important that the teacher knows how to identify the types of student behaviors that indicate the strategy is producing the desired effects. General behaviors a teacher might look for include the following.

- When asked, students describe the teacher as someone who cares for them.
- Students respond to the teacher's verbal interactions.
- Students respond to the teacher's nonverbal interactions.

Desired behaviors such as these are listed for each strategy in this element.

Teachers often wonder how their mastery of specific strategies relates to their mastery of the element as a whole. Successful execution of an element does not depend on the use of every strategy within that element. Rather, multiple strategies are presented within each element to provide teachers with diverse options. Each strategy can be an effective means of implementing the goals of the element. If teachers attain success using a particular strategy, it is not always necessary to master the rest of the strategies within the same element. If a particular strategy proves difficult or ineffective, however, teachers are encouraged to experiment with various strategies to find the method that works best for them.

## Scoring Scale

The following scoring scale can help teachers assess and monitor their progress with this element. The scale has five levels, from Not Using (0) to Innovating (4). A teacher at the Not Using (0) level is unaware of the strategies and behaviors associated with the element or is simply not using any of the strategies. At the Beginning (1) level, a teacher attempts to address the element by trying specific strategies, but does so in an incomplete or incorrect way. When a teacher reaches the Developing (2) level, he or she implements strategies for the element correctly and completely, but does not monitor their effects. At the Applying (3) level, a teacher implements strategies for the element and monitors their effectiveness with his or her students. Finally, a teacher at the Innovating (4) level is fluent with strategies for the element and can adapt them to unique student needs and situations, creating new strategies for the element as necessary.

### Scale for Using Verbal and Nonverbal Behaviors that Indicate Affection for Students

4	3	2	1	0
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using
I adapt behaviors and create new strategies for unique student needs and situations.	I use verbal and non-verbal behaviors that indicate affection for students, and I monitor the extent to which my actions affect students.	I use verbal and non-verbal behaviors that indicate affection for students, but I do not monitor the effect on students.	I use the strategies and behaviors associated with this element incorrectly or with parts missing.	I am unaware of strategies and behaviors associated with this element.

The following examples describe what each level of the scale might look like in the classroom.

**Not Using (0):** A teacher may feel positively about his students but does not actively try to show that he likes his students as individuals.

**Beginning (1):** A teacher uses verbal and nonverbal behaviors to indicate affection for some students. However, she does not use these behaviors to indicate affection for all the students in her class, thus making some students feel very welcome while alienating others.

**Developing (2):** A teacher posts a photo bulletin board, attends after-school functions in which students participate, and tries to have informal conferences with each of his students to get to know them. However, he does not monitor the effects of his relationship-building efforts on students.

**Applying (3):** A teacher tries a variety of strategies to indicate affection for students. The teacher monitors how students react to various strategies to determine which strategies work best for which students. For example, the teacher notices that one student seems to respond better to being given special responsibilities than he does to joking around.

**Innovating (4):** A teacher actively seeks out students for informal conferences and uses the information she gathers to inform future interactions with students. She notices that some students need extra encouragement and interaction to feel welcome and comfortable in class, so she makes an effort to connect with those students about their interests more often.

## STRATEGIES

Each of the following strategies describes specific actions that teachers can take to enact this element in their classrooms. Strategies can be used individually or in combination with each other. Each strategy includes a description, a list of teacher actions, a list of desired student responses, and suggestions for adapting the strategy to provide extra support or extensions. Extra support and extensions relate directly to the Innovating (4) level of the scale. Extra support involves steps teachers can take to ensure they are implementing the strategy effectively for all students, including English learners, special education students, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and reluctant learners. Extensions are ways that teachers can adapt the strategy for advanced students. In addition, some strategies include technology tips that detail ways teachers can use classroom technology to implement or enhance the strategy. Finally, each strategy includes further information, practical examples, or a reproducible designed to aid teachers' implementation of the strategy.

## **Greeting Students at the Classroom Door**

At the beginning of a period, the teacher makes an effort to greet students at the door. The teacher uses each student's first name when they enter to show that the teacher values them and is aware of when they are or are not there. The teacher might also ask students how they are feeling and make positive comments about their learning or achievements. For example, the day after a student is absent, as the student walks in the classroom, the teacher might say, "We missed you yesterday!" to acknowledge the student was not in class. The teacher might then encourage the student to find a time to meet with the teacher to go over what he or she missed while out.

### **Teacher Actions**

- Learning all students' names
- Standing at the door as students enter
- Greeting each student with his or her name
- Asking students how they are doing or making a positive comment about their achievements

### **Desired Student Responses**

- Describing the teacher as someone who is glad to see them
- Smiling or expressing pleasure in response to the teacher's greeting

### **Extra Support**

- Giving students a high five or handshake as they enter the classroom

### **Extension**

- Asking students to greet each other as they enter the room

### **Potential Greetings for Teachers**

#### English Greetings

- Good morning
- Good afternoon
- Howdy
- Hey
- Greetings
- G'day
- How are you doing?
- How was your weekend?
- How's it going?
- What's up?

#### Affectionate Nonverbal Gestures

- Shaking hands
- Waving
- High-fiving
- Making eye contact in a friendly way
- Patting the student on the back
- Smiling at the student
- Pointing at the student in a nonthreatening way
- Winking
- Saluting



*Non-English Greetings*

The pronunciation guide following each greeting represents stressed syllables in capital letters, whereas unstressed syllables are in lower case.

- As-salam alaykom (pronounced ahl sah-LAHM ah-LAY-koom; Arabic)
- Ní hau (pronounced NEE-HAOW; Chinese)
- Dobrý den (pronounced DOH-bree dehn; Czech)
- Hallo (pronounced HAH-lo; Dutch)
- Bonjour (pronounced bohn-ZHOOR; French)
- Guten tag (pronounced GOO-ten tahg; German)
- Yia sou (pronounced YAH-soo; Greek)
- Aloha (pronounced ah-LOH-hah; Hawaiian)
- Shalom (pronounced shah-LOHM; Hebrew)
- Namaste (pronounced nah-mah-STAY; Hindi)
- Szia (pronounced ZEE-yah; Hungarian)
- Dia duit (pronounced DEE-ah GHWIT; Irish Gaelic)
- Ciao (pronounced CHOW; Italian)
- Konnichi ha (pronounced kon-NEE-chee-wa; Japanese)
- Ahn nyeong (pronounced AHN-YONG; Korean)
- Salve (pronounced sal-way; Latin)
- Buna ziua (pronounced BOO-nuh ZEE-wah; Romanian)
- Privet (pronounced PREE-vyet; Russian)
- Zdravo (pronounced ZDRAH-voh; Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian)
- Hola (pronounced OH-la; Spanish)
- Jambo (pronounced JAM-bo; Swahili)
- Hej (pronounced HEY; Swedish)
- Sawatdi (pronounced sah-waht-DEE; Thai)
- Merhaba (pronounced MEHR-hah-bah; Turkish)
- Xin chào (pronounced sin-CHOW; Vietnamese)
- Sawubona (pronounced sah-woo-BOH-nah; Zulu)

## **Informal Conferences**

Informal conferences, unlike more formal academic conferences, allow teachers to chat with students without students projecting expectations onto the meeting. During informal conferences, a teacher might give compliments, ask for student opinions, mention student successes, and pass on positive comments from other teachers. In order to schedule informal conferences, teachers can plan a time in between classes, before or after school, or during lunch or other breaks to check in. Alternatively, informal conferences can be spur-of-the-moment and fairly short. For example, a teacher might stop a student on the way out of class and say something along the lines of “Kara, what did you think of the homework assignment last night?” or “Josh, I was so impressed by your performance in the school musical yesterday—you ought to be really proud of that!”

### **Teacher Actions**

- Scheduling time to talk informally with students (between classes, before or after school, in the lunchroom)
- Giving compliments to students, mentioning their successes, or passing on positive comments from other teachers about students
- Asking students for their opinions about classroom topics

### **Desired Student Responses**

- Describing the teacher as someone who cares about their opinions
- Responding to teacher questions honestly and in detail

### **Extra Support**

- Tracking informal interactions with students and seeking out students who don’t naturally initiate interaction

### **Extension**

- Designating a recurring day (once a week, once a month) when students can come and spend time, ask questions, or get help from the teacher before or after school

### **Technology Tips**

- Create a class website and ask students to post their interests, thoughts, and feelings. Respond to students’ comments in a way that indicates affection or follow up with students in person.
- Send encouraging emails or texts to students and families in which you provide positive comments about students. Use emoticons, images, or statements that reflect your affection for students.

### Potential Topics for Informal Conferences

When addressing students during an informal conference, teachers can bring up or ask students about their thoughts on or feelings toward one or more of the following topics.

- School, local, state, national, or international news events (for example, a recent school election or the discovery of water on Mars)
- Pop culture (for example, a celebrity couple having a baby or a charity event thrown by a famous actress)
- School-level or professional sports (for example, the school winning the state track championships or the local professional football team losing its game)
- Recently released movies or books (for example, a new movie about a superhero or the release of the sequel to a young adult novel)
- Developments in a television show (for example, a plot twist in a popular television show or the elimination of a contestant on a reality show)
- Recommendations (for example, for restaurants, stores, books, movies, music, and so on)
- Weekend plans (for example, what the student did the previous weekend or plans for the upcoming weekend)
- Academic compliments (for example, on a recently completed project or a compliment from another teacher)
- Nonacademic compliments (for example, for being a cheerful presence in class)
- Extracurricular activities (for example, the student's performance on the debate team or in the school orchestra)
- Schoolwide events (for example, spirit week, homecoming, or end-of-year exams)
- Family (for example, inquiring about a brother or sister)
- Activities during vacation (for example, ask the student how he or she spent vacation)
- Class (for example, ask the student how he or she thinks the class is going)
- School (for example, ask the student what changes he or she would make to the school if he or she were the principal)
- Goals (for example, ask the student what he or she hopes to accomplish during this year in an academic or nonacademic sense)
- Dreams (for example, ideal careers, vacations, or homes)
- Hypothetical situations (for example, prompt the student with a hypothetical question like "If you had the choice of a super power, what would it be?" or "If you had to eat only one type of food for the rest of your life, what would it be?")
- Food (for example, ask a student what his or her favorite candy or snack is or ask a student for a recipe)
- Jokes (for example, find an age-appropriate joke and share it with the student)
- Pets (for example, ask students about their pets and inquire about the pets at a later date)
- Academic history (for example, ask the student about previous teachers or schools attended)
- Accomplishments (for example, ask the student about his or her proudest accomplishments to date)

## **Attending After-School Functions**

The teacher shows affection for and interest in students, particularly students who may feel alienated, by attending their after-school activities. If attending, the teacher should let the student know ahead of time and then make an effort to connect with the student at the event, if possible. While this takes time from the teacher's life outside work, it can be helpful in future interactions with the student. Furthermore, the teacher can also make an effort to go to popular school events such as sports games, band and orchestra concerts, or school plays and musicals, even if the teacher does not have specific students in mind to reach out to. Attending such events often shows that a teacher cares about the school community as a whole and provides an opportunity to connect with previous, current, or potential students as well as their parents and other faculty members.

### **Teacher Actions**

- Identifying students who may feel alienated or disengaged in class
- Identifying after-school activities that alienated or disengaged students are involved in
- Telling students that he or she will be attending their event
- Connecting with the student at the event

### **Desired Student Responses**

- Inviting the teacher to after-school functions
- Being pleased to see the teacher at their after-school functions
- Being more engaged in class after the teacher attends their after-school functions

### **Extra Support**

- Taking pictures at a student's after-school function and posting them in the classroom

### **Extension**

- Writing notes to students commenting on specific positive aspects of your experience at their after-school function



## **Greeting Students by Name Outside of School**

During the school day, it is crucial that teachers build relationships with students to facilitate a safe and productive learning environment. However, it is also likely that teachers will run into students or their parents outside of school hours in neighborhood venues such as the grocery store, movie theater, or shopping mall. When this occurs, teachers should make sure to greet students by name and interact in a friendly demeanor. This interaction need not be lengthy and can be as simple as saying, “Hi, Emily. It’s good to see you. Have a good day!”

### **Teacher Actions**

- Learning all students’ names
- Greeting students when he or she sees them outside of school (grocery store, movie theater, shopping mall)

### **Desired Student Responses**

- Responding to the teacher when greeted outside of school
- Describing the teacher as someone who likes seeing them

### **Extra Support**

- Showing interest in students by referring to having seen them outside of school—for instance, “Good morning, Greta. It was fun to see you at the mall yesterday!”

### **Extension**

- Greeting students’ parents by name when seeing them outside of school

### **Tips for Appropriate Out-of-School Communication With Students**

- When encountering a student or a student’s family outside of school, engage in a short and friendly conversation.
- If a student approaches you outside of school, even if you are in a hurry, take the time to acknowledge the student and be polite.
- If you cannot remember the name of a student during an interaction outside of school, you should smile at the student and respond as social conventions dictate, though not try to call the student by name.
- When possible, you can also incorporate background knowledge about the student (academic, extracurricular, or personal) into the conversation to let the student know that you are invested in his or her well-being.
- Keep out-of-school communication with students brief. While out-of-school communication can be a great way to show a student you care, be sure to consider the appropriateness of the interaction.
- Consider your own social media presence and avoid connecting with students via social media websites.
- Review and adhere to your school’s guidelines related to out-of-school communication with students.

## **Giving Students Special Responsibilities or Leadership Roles in the Classroom**

One way to indicate affection for students is to assign them specific tasks or responsibilities in the classroom. Specific tasks or responsibilities for students might include being a line leader on the way to lunch, taking care of a class pet, handing out materials, or collecting assignments. Furthermore, if a student's previous actions have warranted it, the teacher might give the student a leadership role in the classroom, which can further demonstrate the teacher both cares for and trusts the student. For example, to give a student a leadership role in the classroom, a teacher could ask a student to lead a project or be responsible for completing a specific task in the classroom or on a field trip.

### **Teacher Actions**

- Identifying the level of responsibility a student can handle
- Identifying roles or classroom responsibilities that can be delegated to students
- Asking students to assume roles or classroom responsibilities they can be successful with
- Monitoring students' levels of performance and satisfaction with their roles and responsibilities

### **Desired Student Responses**

- Describing the teacher as someone who trusts them
- Fulfilling their roles or responsibilities successfully

### **Extra Support**

- Giving specific instructions to students, and checking on them frequently to make sure they understand and are fulfilling their responsibilities or roles appropriately

### **Extension**

- If students need help with their responsibility or role, asking them to suggest another student to help them and having them explain why they think that student would be a good helper

## **Potential Responsibilities or Leadership Roles in the Classroom**

### **Responsibilities**

Responsibilities are special assignments that a student is responsible for. Teachers can use the following suggestions to identify relevant responsibilities to assign to students.

- Handing out materials
- Collecting assignments
- Alphabetizing papers, materials, notebooks or other items for the teacher
- Sweeping the floor
- Wiping down the chalkboard or whiteboard at the end of the day

## Using Verbal and Nonverbal Behaviors that Indicate Affection for Students

- Taking attendance
- Watering the classroom plants
- Feeding the classroom pet
- Delivering a message to the office
- Escorting a student to the nurse's office
- Researching information (if a question comes up in class, ask a specific student to find the answer to the question and report back tomorrow)
- Telling the teacher when a certain amount of time has passed or cueing the teacher when a certain amount of time is left in the class
- Turning on and off electronics in the classroom; adjusting the volume, brightness, or other settings for specific electronics in the classroom
- Opening and closing the blinds
- Making a decision that affects the whole class (for example, if the teacher asks whether the class should move into individual seatwork or small group work, the student asked gets to decide)

### Leadership Roles

Leadership roles either indicate a leadership position for a specific project or over a longer period of time. For example, a classroom responsibility might be to water the plants, but if a teacher assigns a specific student to be responsible for watering the plant for a week independently, then the responsibility shifts into a leadership role.

- **Material or supply chief:** Keeps the classroom materials and supplies in order
- **Spill control:** Cleans up in the event of a spill
- **Animal caretaker:** Takes care of the classroom pet
- **Plant caretaker:** Takes care of and waters the plants in the classroom
- **Recycling inspector:** Reminds students to recycle and makes sure the bins aren't too full
- **Librarian:** Ensures the classroom library is orderly
- **Clean-up chief:** Oversees clean-up processes and makes sure that all the tasks get completed
- **Teacher's helper:** Does little tasks for the teacher as needed
- **Project leader:** Communicates with the teacher during projects
- **Note taker:** Takes notes during class for absent students
- **Attendance taker:** Takes attendance at the beginning of class or during a field trip to make sure all students are accounted for
- **Computer helper:** Makes sure all computers are turned off or students are logged off at the end of the day
- **Electrician:** Makes sure lights are off when the classroom is empty
- **Daily reporter:** Checks the weather and date each day and posts it somewhere in the room



## **Scheduled Interaction**

The teacher creates a schedule that ensures regular interaction with each student by selecting a few students each day to seek out and talk to. The teacher might interact with students in the lunchroom, during breaks between classes, or right after school. During these personalized encounters, the teacher can talk about academic or nonacademic things, so long as the teacher makes the student feel as though he or she is on the teacher's radar. For example, a teacher might divide the students in his or her class into about ten pairs or small groups, then reach out to the students in one group or pair each day. At the end of two weeks, the teacher begins the cycle again to ensure regular interactions with all students.

### **Teacher Actions**

- Selecting a few students each day with whom to interact intentionally
- Creating a schedule to ensure intentional interaction with each student over a specific period of time
- Seeking out and talking to selected students in the lunchroom, between classes, or before or after school

### **Desired Student Responses**

- Describing the teacher as someone who likes to talk to them
- Remembering a recent interaction with the teacher outside normal class time

### **Extra Support**

- Scheduling interactions more often with students who need extra support

### **Extension**

- Asking students to interact with classmates with whom they don't often converse



## **Photo Bulletin Board**

The teacher creates a bulletin board that displays students' photos, personal goals, hobbies, interests, and other fun facts. The content of a photo bulletin board can change from time to time based on the unit or can highlight students who have performed well on assignments, shown dramatic improvement on a learning goal, or enacted classroom values outside of class. The teacher can also coordinate the photo bulletin board with student interest surveys to help students in the class get to know one another. For example, the teacher could ask students to bring in photographs of themselves and to complete a personal survey. The teacher would attach students' photographs to their surveys and post them at the beginning of the year so that students can get to know each other.

### **Teacher Actions**

- Creating a bulletin board with a photo of each student
- Asking students to post information about themselves by their pictures (thoughts, goals, interests)
- Changing photos and information periodically

### **Desired Student Responses**

- Posting information about themselves by their pictures
- Reading other students' comments

### **Extra Support**

- Helping students draw a picture, write a sentence, select a quote, or create some other small representation of themselves to hang beside their picture

### **Extension**

- Asking students to bring in a favorite photo of themselves for the photo bulletin board (screen these before displaying them)

### **Technology Tips**

- Use a camera to photograph students at the beginning of the year. Edit students' photos together to reinforce the idea that the classroom is a team.
- Use students' pictures in a digital seating chart for learning students' names.
- Create a Student of the Month slideshow that showcases one or two students and that incorporates students' photos, favorite music, and information about the students.

# Photo Bulletin Board

PLACE PHOTO HERE

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

In this picture, I am:

This photo is important to me because:

## Physical Behaviors

The teacher monitors his or her physical behaviors and gestures to ensure that they signal affection and encouragement for students. For example, a teacher might use smiles and high fives to communicate affection for students, while patting a student on the back or putting a hand on a student's shoulder could be used to communicate interest or concern for a student. While talking to a student, the teacher makes eye contact, stands close to the student (enough to communicate concern or interest without invading their personal space), or looks interested in what they have to say.

### Teacher Actions

- Smiling and making eye contact with students while talking or listening to them
- Giving students hugs, high fives, or pats on the back
- Putting a hand on a student's shoulder or standing close enough to communicate interest (without invading his or her personal space) while talking or listening to him or her

### Desired Student Responses

- Maintaining eye contact while talking to the teacher
- Feeling comfortable while talking to the teacher
- Describing the teacher as someone who cares about them

### Extra Support

- Finding alternative ways to express affection to students for whom physical contact is unpleasant or awkward
- Studying different cultural norms for physical contact and being sensitive to students' individual preferences for physical contact

### Extension

- Asking students which physical gestures they prefer

## Physical Behaviors That Indicate Affection

As always, when using physical behaviors to indicate affection, teachers should be aware of how their actions affect students and use their discretion to ensure that behaviors remain appropriate.

- **Smiling:** Smiling is a universal symbol of happiness and indicates a pleasant mindset. When teachers encounter students and want to show that they care for them, even just a smile in acknowledgment of their presence can go a long way toward building amicable classroom relationships.
- **Eye contact:** When talking with students, teachers can hold eye contact to demonstrate engagement in the conversation. However, teachers should monitor the length of time they hold eye contact with students to ensure that it does not verge of the brink of staring.

## Using Verbal and Nonverbal Behaviors that Indicate Affection for Students

- **Mirroring actions of students:** Mirroring, also called isopraxism, is a subconscious way that humans and other animals show a connection to one another. Teachers can subtly mirror students' physical gestures, such as by crossing their legs when a student does.
- **Standing close to students:** Teachers can stand in the physical proximity of students to show their interest in and affection for students. Not only does being near a student open up opportunities for interaction between a student and a teacher, but it also shows a fondness for and comfort around that student.
- **Leaning forward while sitting:** If a teacher is sitting down and talking to a student or small group of students, the teacher can indicate interest in what is being said by leaning forward in his or her chair toward the speaker.
- **Shaking hands:** Shaking hands is often used as a sign of respect. Teachers may shake students' hands as a greeting or goodbye in and out of class or ask to shake students hands after they turn in an assessment to indicate that the teacher trusts the students.
- **High fives:** High fives are an energetic way to show students that you appreciate them or their actions. High fives can be given as a reward when students do a good job on something or to acknowledge students' presence in a fun way.
- **Pats on the back:** Teachers can pat students on the back to show appreciation for the student. Pats on the back can also be a sympathetic gesture for teachers to use with students who seem upset.
- **Head nods:** While students are speaking, teachers can use head nods to indicate agreement or that they are listening to what students are saying. Teachers can also use head nods to acknowledge the presence of a student, particularly if the environment is loud or if the student and teacher are just passing by one another.
- **Waving:** If a student is outside of a comfortable speaking range, a teacher can wave to show that he or she sees the student. Depending on the situation, the teacher can use a wave as a brief acknowledgment of the student or follow up by going over and starting a conversation.
- **Applauding:** By clapping his or her hands, a teacher can show that he or she thinks that students are doing a good job. The teacher should also model intensity and enthusiasm during this gesture and may accompany the action with verbal recognition, such as by saying "Bravo!" or "Yes, well done!"

## Humor

Humor is a great way for a teacher to build relationships with students. When using humor in the classroom, the teacher can use playful banter, jokes, or self-directed humor. The teacher might also use historical and popular sayings to make a point or incorporate cartoons, jokes, puns, and plays on words into instruction. The teacher can also tease students in a lighthearted manner; however, if a teacher does tease students, he or she must consider what is being said, how it might affect the student, and the degree to which it is appropriate. For example, a teacher may tease a student if the student is actively being silly and seems to want attention, whereas the same teacher might not tease a student if the student is reserved and generally shies away from being the center of attention.

### Teacher Actions

- Joking or bantering playfully with students
- Using self-directed humor or historical or popular sayings when talking to students or teaching
- Incorporating cartoons, jokes, puns, and plays on words into instruction

### Desired Student Responses

- Laughing or smiling in response to the teacher's use of humor
- Describing the teacher as appropriate in his or her use of humor
- Maintaining a respectful attitude toward the teacher, themselves, and other students when engaging in playful banter or jokes

### Extra Support

- Making sure that students have the background knowledge needed to understand jokes and humor used in the classroom

### Extension

- Inviting students to share teacher-approved jokes or funny sayings about the content with the class

### Ways to Incorporate Humor Into the Classroom

- **Playful banter:** Teachers and students can exchange playful banter, where both parties engage in lighthearted teasing. Teachers should be careful of which students they engage in banter with, be aware of when playful banter has gone on for too long, and monitor whether the tone of the banter becomes serious or mean-spirited. Teachers should also monitor exchanges between students to ensure the tone and content is appropriate for a classroom setting—if students cannot use playful banter appropriately among themselves, teachers should avoid modeling this behavior.
- **Self-directed humor:** Perhaps one of the easiest ways to incorporate humor into the classroom is to use self-directed humor. Teachers can do this by pointing out when they do something silly or when they make a mistake. This strategy is particularly powerful for perfectionist students, as it models to students not to take themselves too seriously.

## Using Verbal and Nonverbal Behaviors that Indicate Affection for Students

- **Cartoons:** Teachers can place cartoons on assessments, PowerPoints, and handouts, or project them on the board at the beginning or end of class. Teachers should find cartoons that are relevant to the content being taught. Alternatively, to make cartoons into an activity, teachers can ask students to create their own humorous cartoons or captions for cartoons.
- **Puns and plays on words:** Puns and plays on words are fun ways to manipulate language in humorous ways and can be incorporated into one-on-one interactions with students or into a lesson itself. However, puns and plays on words will not be successful if students are not aware of the basis of joke. Teachers should consider age level and the difficulty of the joke before sharing a pun or play on words.
- **Jokes:** Similar to puns and plays on words, teachers can tell jokes to students at any point in a lesson or during one-on-one interactions. Jokes can be content-related, though teachers can use jokes unrelated to content being taught as well. Alternatively, teachers can also ask students to bring in their own jokes. Jokes should always be screened for appropriateness before being shared.
- **Assignments:** One fun way to make assignments more enjoyable is to incorporate humor into them. For example, a teacher may create a writing assignment on a humorous topic or add funny, nonserious questions or answers to worksheets or assessments.
- **Classroom decorations:** When decorating their classroom, teachers can choose to put up classroom decorations that are funny. Teachers can designate a bulletin board to post humorous images, quotations, and jokes or hang up humorous posters around the room.
- **Schedule:** To consistently add humor to the classroom, teachers can consciously incorporate humor into the schedule. For example, a teacher may choose to begin her first period class each Monday with a funny video to get students energized, ask students to wear funny clothing or accessories on Fridays, or choose a specific day for students to bring in jokes and share them.



## REPRODUCIBLES

Teachers can use the following reproducibles to monitor their implementation of this element. The reproducible titled *Tracking Progress Over Time* helps teachers set goals related to their proficiency with this element and track their progress toward these goals over the course of a unit, semester, or year. *Tracking Teacher Actions* and *Tracking Student Responses* allow observers in classrooms to monitor specific teacher and student behavior related to this element. Teachers themselves can also use the *Tracking Student Responses* reproducible to document instances of student behaviors during class. The *Strategy Reflection Log* provides teachers a space to write down their thoughts and reflect on the implementation process for specific strategies related to this element. Finally, this section provides both a student survey and a teacher survey, the results of which provide feedback about teachers' proficiency with this element.

# Tracking Progress Over Time

Use this worksheet to set a goal for your use of this element, make a plan for increasing your mastery, and chart your progress toward your goal.

Element: \_\_\_\_\_

Initial Score: \_\_\_\_\_

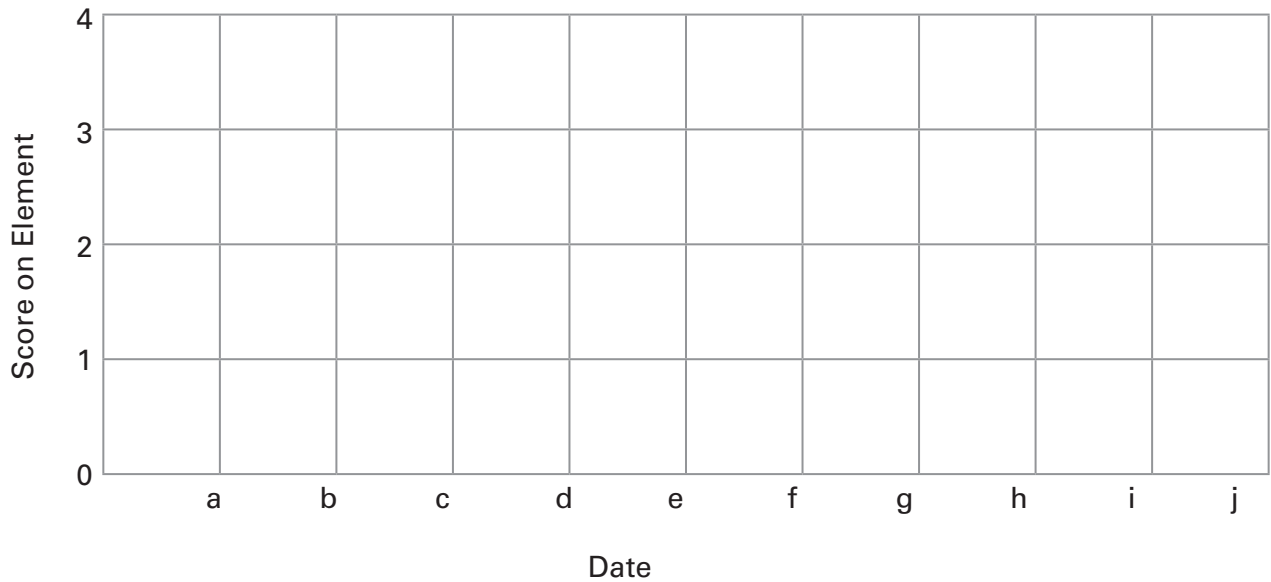
Goal Score: \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Specific things I am going to do to improve: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



a. \_\_\_\_\_

f. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

g. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

h. \_\_\_\_\_

d. \_\_\_\_\_

i. \_\_\_\_\_

e. \_\_\_\_\_

j. \_\_\_\_\_

## Tracking Teacher Actions

During an observation, the observer can use this form to record the teacher's usage of strategies related to the element of using verbal and nonverbal behaviors that indicate affection for students.

Observation Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Length of Observation: \_\_\_\_\_

Check Strategies You Intend to Use	Strategies	Description of What Was Observed
	Greeting Students at the Classroom Door	
	Informal Conferences	
	Attending After-School Functions	
	Greeting Students by Name Outside of School	
	Giving Students Special Responsibilities or Leadership Roles in the Classroom	
	Scheduled Interaction	

	Photo Bulletin Board	
	Physical Behaviors	
	Humor	
	Other:	
	Other:	

## Tracking Student Responses

A teacher or observer can use this worksheet to record instances of student behavior to inform planning and implementation of strategies associated with using verbal and nonverbal behaviors that indicate affection for students. Any item followed by an asterisk is an example of undesirable behavior related to the element; the teacher should look for a decrease in the number of instances of these items.

Observation Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Length of Observation: \_\_\_\_\_

Behavior	Number of Instances
Describing the teacher as caring	
Responding positively to the teacher's verbal interactions	
Responding positively to the teacher's nonverbal interactions	
Responding negatively to interactions with the teacher*	
Greeting the teacher	
Seeking out the teacher to talk	
Demonstrating confident, comfortable, or open body language during class	
Showing discomfort or unease through body language*	
Laughing at a teacher's jokes	
Other:	
Other:	

## Strategy Reflection Log

Use this worksheet to select a strategy, set a goal, and reflect on your use of that strategy.

Element: \_\_\_\_\_

Strategy: \_\_\_\_\_

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

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Date	How did it go?

## Student Survey for Using Verbal and Nonverbal Behaviors That Indicate Affection for Students

### 1. My teacher likes me.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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### 2. My teacher cares about me.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	-------------------------------	-------	----------------

### 3. My teacher gives me compliments about my accomplishments.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	-------------------------------	-------	----------------

### 4. My teacher smiles a lot.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	-------------------------------	-------	----------------

### 5. My teacher makes me feel welcome in class.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	-------------------------------	-------	----------------

### 6. I like talking to my teacher.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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## Teacher Survey for Using Verbal and Nonverbal Behaviors That Indicate Affection for Students

**1. I compliment students on their accomplishments.**

Often                      Sometimes                      Rarely                      Never                      I don't know

**2. I try to talk with all of my students during class.**

Often                      Sometimes                      Rarely                      Never                      I don't know

**3. I try to talk with all of my students outside of class (for example, at lunch, in between classes, and so on).**

Often                      Sometimes                      Rarely                      Never                      I don't know

**4. I use humor with students when appropriate.**

Often                      Sometimes                      Rarely                      Never                      I don't know

**5. I greet students as they enter the classroom.**

Often                      Sometimes                      Rarely                      Never                      I don't know

**6. I use physical behaviors to show that I care for students.**

Often                      Sometimes                      Rarely                      Never                      I don't know

**7. I give students special responsibilities or leadership positions to show that I trust them.**

Often                      Sometimes                      Rarely                      Never                      I don't know