Some Positive Responses to Student Misbehavior

"You want your responses to take the least amount of planning, the least amount of effort, the least amount of time, and the least amount of paperwork." Fred Jones

Non-verbal Responses

Positive Teacher Responses	Looks Like/Sounds Like
1. Withitness: Know what is happening at all times in the classroom.	• Walk around the room. Make sure you spend time in each quadrant. • Scan the faces of the students, making eye contact with as many as possible. • Look for behaviors that can turn into problems—make eye contact, move toward student, and/or say something.
2. Signaling: eye contact and facial expressions	• Look at the student in a way that it sends the message: "I know what you are doing." • Use your teacher look.
3. Signaling: gestures	• Gestures include: pointing to the rules posted in the room, holding up your hand, shaking your head, leaning in toward a student, placing your index finger to your lips, placing hands on hips and folding arms.
4. Proximity	• Move around the classroom. • Stand next to a student who is misbehaving. • Arrange seats so that you can get to any student quickly.
5. Planned Positioning	• Stand next to the classroom door. • Sit between two students. • Never turn you back on the students.
6. Waiting	• Stop talking. Stand quietly and wait. Wait until all students are doing what they are suppose to be doing.
7. Behavior Records	• Look at the student to get their attention or move to the student. Say nothing. Record the behavior.

Verbal Responses

Positive Teacher Responses	Looks Like/Sounds Like
8. Name: Using a student's name in a positive way	• "Shelby, will you act as our recorder for us during the next activity?" • "Jake, I'll be asking you to share your thoughts on the next question."
9. Reminders, prompts, and cues	• Quietly walk over to the student, state the reminder privately, and move away. • Keep a Post-It note on the student's desk. Add a mark to it each time the student displays the inappropriate behavior. • Place a Post-It note on the desk with the rule on it. Remove the Post-It when the rule is being consistently followed.
10. Descriptive statements	• "Its almost time for break." • "Papers are due in 7 minutes." • "It's nearly time to change classes."
11. Enforceable Statements	• "I listen to people who raise their hand." • "When everything is cleaned up, I will excuse you to lunch." • "When everyone is quiet, I will begin reading."
12. Questions	• "Jen, are you aware that your pencil tapping is disturbing others?" • "Julie, would you read silently. Your voice is distracting to

	people sitting near you." • "Brad, do you realize your humming is distracting to others in the class?"
13. Choices	• "Would you rather work alone or with your group?" • "Feel free to do the first 10 problems or the last 10" • "Which do you prefer, sitting in rows or in a circle?"
14. Removing Distractions	• Remove the item of distraction. Return the item when the student is back on task. • Ask the student to put the item away. • Pass materials out after you give directions.
15. Positive Interactions: Increase the ratio of positive to negative teacher to student interactions.	• Aim for five positive to one negative teacher to student interaction.
16. Whole class reminders: Refocus students without calling out their name.	• "Safety please" • "Respect quiet time" • "I see a few students off task. Let me repeat the directions."
17. But Why?: Explain the rationale for the rule.	• "We have this rule because . . ."
18. Whole Class Assessment: Post rules and ask students to self-assess periodically.	• "Lets review our class rules and assess how we did today."
19. Redirection: Remind student of the task without commenting on the off task behavior.	• "What is your job right now?" • "You need to get to class."
20. Problem Solving	• "Lets figure out how you can get to class on time."
21. Seating: Change seat (student choice or teacher choice)	• "Michael, please select another seat where you can focus better." • " Michael, please move your seat next to me."
22. Offer Assistance	• "Emma, how can I help you? • "Juan, what can I do to help you be successful today?" • "Maria, what can I do to help you get started?"
23. Active Listening: Listen to the student and paraphrase back.	• "So you are upset because . . ."
24. Verbal Praise: Used to recognize other students doing the right thing which in turn will encourage other students to demonstrate positive behavior.	• "Group three is reading the directions together and identifying roles in the group"
25. Verbal Praise: Used to encourage students and reinforce positive behavior.	• " Marcus, you are doing a great job walking quietly in the hallway"
26. Differential Reinforcement: Catch them being good and reinforce.	• Two or 3 times in a class speak to the student softly and privately. Tell the student: "I like that way you are paying attention and asking questions in class that are thought provoking."
27. Preemptive: Remind student(s) of appropriate behavior before the activity takes place.	• "Bobby, remember that during independent work time I expect you to remain in your seat, work on your assignment and not talk. If you have a question, raise your hand and I'll help you?"
28. State the appropriate behavior. Identify the incorrect behavior.	• "We respect others in this room and that means not using put downs"
29. Smile, give feedback, pause,	• (Smile and say) "Nathan, please stop talking to Joey and get

state name, say please + your request, pause, say thank you, and state name.	to work on your assignment. Thank you, Nathan. (Smile again)
30. Response in a positive way with a reminder of the rule	• "Thank you for sharing. Can you remember to raise your hand please?"
31. Ask for an alternative appropriate response	• "How can you show respect and still get your point across?"
32. Provide an opportunity to practice the skill and provide verbal feedback	• "That's much better, thank you for showing respect towards others"
33. Planned Ignoring	• Ignore the undesirable behavior. Go on with business and wait to catch the student being good. • Recognize the positive behavior of other students.
34. Time Delay: Wait the student out. Give the student time to think it through.	• "Let me give you 5 minutes to think it through and I'll come back and we will talk more"
35. Premacking: Withhold something the student desires until he does what you have asked him.	• "You can play the game, after you finish your math problems."
36. Hurdle Help: Provide help to the student in order to overcome difficulty in completing the assignment, thereby removing the hurdle.	• "Nina, you seem stuck. Lets see if I can help you figure out what you need to do next and how you can help yourself the next time."
37. Antiseptic Bouncing: Remove the student from the situation	• "Lets talk a walk" • "Please go next door to complete your work. I'll check on you in 5 minutes." • "Please go get a drink and come back and we will talk."
38. Logical Consequences: Strategies designed to help the student consider the possible consequences of his actions.	• "If you slide down the hand rails, you might hurt yourself."
39. Restructure: shifting gears	• Abandon the activity or switch to an alternative activity.
40. Direct Appeal to Values: Appeal to the values of student(s) when intervening in a problem.	• "You seem angry with me. Have I been unfair to you?" • " I know you are angry, but if you break that, you will have to replace it with your own money." • "Your classmates will be angry with you if you continue to interrupt the lesson" • "I care about you and I can not let your behavior to continue." • "I know you will be mad at yourself if you tear up that paper you've worked on all period."