

# Social and Emotional Learning

## Lesson Blueprints: Establishing Class Norms

### Grade Level: Middle and High School

#### Essential Question

Why is it important to establish class norms?

#### Materials

- Paper and writing tools
- Materials for creating a visual

#### Teacher

1. Explain that because of the sensitive nature of some of the materials and topics that will be covered in this class, it is important to establish an agreed upon code for behavior so everyone will feel safe and respected.
2. Explain how the class will use norms instead of rules. Norms foster a positive climate, set the expectations for large sets of behavior from everyone in the group, and apply to all situations all the time. Norms are stated positively, such as “Everyone will...” instead of “Never” or “Don’t...”
3. Determine a way to break into small groups of 3-4 students.
4. Each group will create a list of at least five norms for behavior in class during discussions, presentations, and general participation.
5. Norms must be worded clearly so that everyone understands the ideas and expectations represented and positively to guide behaviors instead of restrict them.
6. Give students 15 minutes with groups to create their norms.
7. Gather back as a group to discuss and determine the five (5) norms everyone can agree to observe. A space to record all ideas for everyone to see is helpful. Note: a list of suggested norm categories is provided below for facilitation.
8. Ask for a volunteer to create a visual/poster of the rules that can be used as a reference.
9. Remind students that the class will refer to the norms on a weekly if not daily basis.
10. After a month, norms can be revisited and revised as the class deems necessary.

#### Conclusion

Discuss how class norms will be used and supported by the class community. How will the class refer to the ground rules/norms during class sessions? How will everyone take responsibility for adherence to the class ground rules/norms? Why are norms important?

## Some suggested norm categories

- Respect
- The Vegas Rule: What happens in class stays in class
- Open/honest participation without naming names in discussions
- Pass rule (“I’d rather not”)
- Non-judgment
- Voice our own opinions
- Acceptance of others’ ideas, opinions, interpretations, etc.

**Note:** Use Group Participation Rubric for assessment

## Notes

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