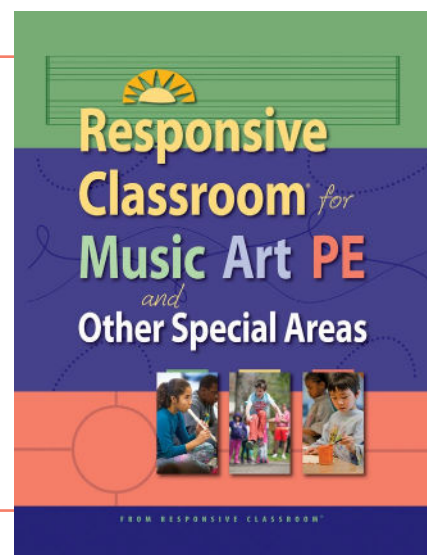


Responsive Classroom for Music, Art, PE and Other Special Areas

From *Responsive Classroom*



Chapter 1: Opening Routines

“The time you take planning for a calm and orderly beginning to each period will pay off in many ways. You’ll give students a smooth start to their special area period and pave the way for them to engage more productively with their classmates and their learning. And you’ll give yourself more time to teach the content you love.” (22)

The elements of an effective opening routine include orderly entry, simple warm-up, teacher greeting, posted message, and efficient transition to the day’s learning activities. How are you currently starting sessions with students? What challenges do you experience? Review the chart on pages 21 and 22 to consider a change that might help your opening routine.

Chapter 2: Teacher Language

“A teacher’s words have tremendous power to support children’s academic and social-emotional learning. Powerful teacher language—the professional use of words, tone, and pace—helps students envision what they can accomplish in your special area, see themselves as capable members of a learning community, build positive relationships with you and their classmates, and engage in their work with attention and enthusiasm.” (25)

Reinforcing language, reminding language, and open-ended questions are powerful tools to cultivate the best in children. The process of changing our teacher language requires time, practice, and patience. Review the list of tips on page 38. What is one tip you can implement today as you work to improve your teacher language?

Chapter 3: Interactive Modeling

“In an Interactive Modeling lesson, you invite students to actively notice and describe what you are showing them, let them practice immediately, and give them meaningful feedback right away.” (44)

Interactive Modeling is a powerful tool for teaching routines, transitions, and using equipment, as well as content and social-emotional skills. Review “When to Use Interactive Modeling” on pages 50–58. What is one area that you can use Interactive Modeling to teach? Use the guide on page 67 (or use the digital version [here](#)) to plan out what you will do and say to teach this routine or skill.

Chapter 4: Rules and Routines

“Together, rules and routines form the foundation for learning. Rules—guidelines for how to behave so that everyone can learn—enable students to take care of themselves, each other, and their environment and materials. Routines—established ways of doing essential tasks—enable students to work efficiently and with an appropriate measure of autonomy.” (70)

Establishing clear rules and routines, and referring to them regularly, creates a climate of safety, respect, and order. Talking about the rules frequently and proactively is key to connecting student behavior to the rules. Review the chart on page 77 and 78 for examples of what it sounds like to have proactive rules talks. What are some other situations in your special area classroom that are opportunities to connect expectations to the rules? What would you say to begin these proactive conversations?

Chapter 5: Interactive Learning Structures

“You can use interactive learning structures while teaching just about any lesson and at any stage of the lesson. They’re equally useful for helping students engage actively in their learning and for helping them reflect on what they’ve learned.” (95)

Interactive learning structures are easy to do, simple to create or adapt, and blend seamlessly with instruction. Review the nine interactive learning structures listed on pages 107–114. What is one structure you would like to try with students? How would you adapt it for your special area?

Chapter 6: Academic Choice

“Even within the tight time constraints of a special area class, you can use this practice to maximize students’ learning; help them develop thoughtfulness, independence, and confidence; and build a stronger learning community.” (120)

Academic Choice is a way to give students options that are aligned with a learning objective. Review the Sample Academic Choice Lesson Plans on page 134–136 and the list of common challenges on page 137. What are some ways you could incorporate Academic Choice effectively in your learning space? Use the Academic Choice Planner on page 139 (or use the digital version here) to explore and/or discuss how this could work for your special area class.

Chapter 7: Energizers

“Quick, engaging energizers—whole-group activities, songs, and chants—are a great way to give students’ minds and bodies a break without disrupting tightly scheduled lesson plans.” (141)

When students have brief opportunities to refresh and refocus, they are better able to listen and think. Taking a few minutes to do an energizer together can actually give you more time for teaching! Review the fifteen energizers listed on pages 148–153. What is one energizer you would like to try with students? When would you plan to use it?

Chapter 8: Responding to Misbehavior

“No matter how well planned your lesson or how exciting your content, most students will occasionally misbehave in your special area room.” (160)

Four strategies for responding to misbehavior are proximity, visual cues, redirecting language, and logical consequences. Use the planner on page 173 to brainstorm common misbehaviors you experience in your special area and consider how you will respond in the future. Keep this planner nearby so you can update it with student responses and reflect on how to finetune your approach.

Chapter 9: Closing Routines

“Having a calm and positive closing routine to look forward to often motivates students to wrap up their work efficiently so they can enjoy that final few minutes together and end the period on a high note.” (176)

The way you end your time with students matters just as much as the way you begin it. What are some of the challenges you currently experience with the closing routine in your special area? How can you incorporate strategies like Interactive Modeling, positive teacher language, and investing students in the rules to make the end of your time with students more effective?