2 Strategies to Improve Teacher-Student Interactions in Lessons & Discussions

Session DA-14
9:00-10:15 AM
Tuesday, July 7, 2015

Rick Morris
Music has never been easier to use in the classroom. Create cues and play them with just two taps.  
1) Tap the cue and then 2) tap the Play button that appears. The Countdown timer, when projected on a large screen, makes it easy for students to see how much time is left for an activity.

Apple and Android 

4.99

Class Cards

Apps by Rick Morris

Keep your students engaged by calling upon them randomly. Six score buttons allow you to easily record the quality of each response. Overall grades are displayed as a percentage and can be emailed or exported.

Apple and Android

4.99

Class Cues

Download 14 mini-posters.

Playlists, songs, and suggestions.

A how-to video about this great idea.

Rick's responses by topic.

How to get Rick to your school.

6 How-To Guides in PDF format.
Classroom Gestures
(Excerpted from, Tools & Toys: Fifty Fun Ways to Love Your Class)

The letter “I”
Used to show that the student has a question.
(“I have a question.”)

The letter “A”
Used to show that the student has an answer.

The letter “C”
Used to show that the student has a comment.

Lights off.
May I use the restroom?
One moment, please.

Lights on.
Line up, please.

I am ignoring you.
(student-to-student)

Stand up.

Sit down.

That was off-topic.

Thank you.

Pencils down.

Suggested resources:
http://commtechlab.msu.edu/sites/aslweb/browser.htm
www.aslpro.com

Download mini-posters of these basic signs from our website and display in your room as a reference guide for your students.
www.NewManagement.com
Safe Engagement
(Excerpted from Eight Great Ideas: Simple Ways to Transform Your Teaching)

It took me about fifteen years of teaching before I began to realize that I was doing most of the talking during lessons and discussions. (Research indicates that the teacher’s voice accounts for 80% of the words being spoken.) Furthermore, when I pondered the fact that a lot of my words were nothing more than a repetition of what a student had just said—a traditional behavior known as echoing—I decided to try something new.

The benefits of not echoing
- a significant reduction in how much talking you normally do
- no need to validate everything being said by the students
- increased levels of meta-cognition for students
- increased levels of formative assessment for teachers

The challenge of not echoing
- it takes time to recondition yourself
- you’ll need to ensure that students are listening to each other
- deal with the soft speakers [See suggestions below.]

Formative Assessment Booster

Try Taking Multiple Responses
Present a question or offer a thought to students.
Pause briefly or allow time for a bit of collaboration
Call upon students randomly and respond with thank you. [Or thanks. A nod is also good.]
After taking multiple responses, verbally confirm the correct information. Here’s one possibility:
“If you said or thought, ‘both sides contributed to Shay’s Rebellion,’ then you are correct.”

After five or six student responses, raise a hand and display a V using your first two fingers. This gesture will indicate to your students that you are looking for volunteers. It’s a nice change of pace that provides students with the freedom to respond.

What About the Soft Speakers?

Ask Students to Say Echo
Student A responds to being called upon by sharing a thought. Student B, sitting across the room, didn’t hear what was just said. Student B says, “Echo” loud enough for Student A to hear. Student A, upon hearing the word echo, repeats the thought. Result? Better speaking skills. Better listening skills.

Prepare for Overuse
Let the novelty wear off. Allow students time to become comfortable with the power of saying echo. Counsel the abusers privately. [Core Principle #4: You can focus your attention.]

Make it Manageable [Core Principle #5]
Limit initial use of the strategy to a specific time or interaction. For example, allowing students to use the “Say Echo” strategy only during journal sharing might help to make the trial run a bit smoother and more successfully. As students gain experience, remove the restrictions. In a month or so, the whole thing will be automatic. And what a difference it will make.