

Twenty Kinds of Class Meetings

Class meetings are the best way to address potential problems, check in with your students, and help build a safe and positive classroom. Below are sample topics you can use for your class meetings. From Educators for Social Responsibility at

www.esmational.org

Good news meeting: "Who has some good news to share?"

Circle whip: Go around the circle; everyone can either complete the "sentence-starter" or choose to pass. After everyone has had a turn, the teacher can use individual students' responses as a springboard for interactive discussion. Some sample sentence-starters are:

"Something I like about this class..."

"Something I think would make our class better ..."

"A decision I think we should make ..."

"I'm wondering why ..."

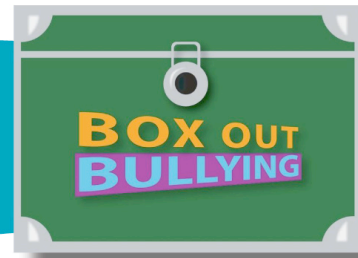
"I wish ..."

Appreciation time: "Who would you like to appreciate?"

Compliment time: One or two children are chosen; taking one child at a time, the teacher invites classmates to say something they like or admire about that person.

Goal-setting meeting: Discuss the goals for the morning, the day, the week, a curriculum unit, the academic year.





Rule-setting meeting: "What rules do we need for our classroom?" "For going to gym?" "For the upcoming field trip?"

Rule-evaluating meeting: Have students write about, then discuss the following questions: "What are the school rules? Why do we have them? Are they good rules? If you could change one rule, what would it be?" ... Do any of our classroom rules need changing to make them work better?

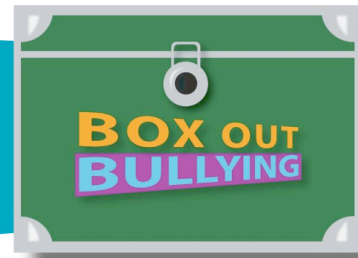
Stage-setting meeting: For example, before a small-group activity: "What can you do to make things go smoothly in your group?"

Feedback and Evaluation: "How well did you work together?" "How could you make it go better the next time?" "What was good about today?" "How can we make tomorrow a better day?"

Reflections on learning: "What did you learn from this activity (unit, project, book)?" "One new idea or understanding?"

Student presentation: One or two students present a piece of their work, such as a project or story; other class members ask questions and offer appreciative comments.





Problem Solving/Conflict Resolution

Individual problems: "Who's having a problem that we might be able to help Solve?"

Group problem: "What's a class problem we should talk about?"

Complaints and recommendations: Ground rule: You can make a complaint about a Problem, but you have to offer a recommendation for correcting it.

Fairness meeting: "How can we solve this conflict (e.g., cutting in line, disputes over materials or equipment, arguments over cleanup) in a way that's fair to everybody?"

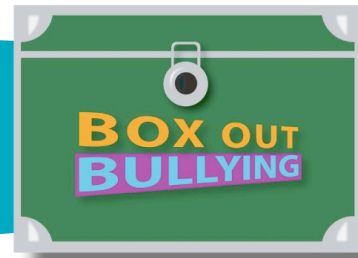
Academic issues: "Why do we have to study this?" "What would help you do a better job on homework?" "On the next test?" "How could the last test have been improved?"

Class room improvement meeting: "What changes would make our classroom better?" Possibilities: Changing the physical arrangement of the classroom, new ways of working together, new learning games, ideas for class-created bulletin boards, etc.

Follow-up meeting: "How is the solution/change we agreed upon working? Can we make it work better?"

Planning meeting: "What group projects would you like to do? "What topics to study?" "What field trips to take?" "What would be fun to do differently next week in spelling, math, or science?" "What would be the most exciting way to study this next topic?"





Concept meeting: "What is a friend?" How do you make one?" "What is a conscience? How does it help you?" "What is a lie? Is it ever right to tell one?" "What is trust? Why is it important?"

Sticky situations: "What should you/would you do if: You find a wallet on the sidewalk with \$20 in it? . . . "You find just a \$20 bill?... "You see a kid stealing something from somebody else's locker?"... "There's a new kid that you'd like to be nice to but your friends think he/she is weird?"... "A friend asks to copy your homework?"... "A friend you're with shoplifts a CD?"... "Two kids on the bus are picking on a little kid and making him cry?"

Suggestion box/class: Any appropriate item students have submitted for discussion.

Meeting on meeting: "What have you liked about our class meetings?" What haven't you liked? What have we accomplished? How can we improve our meetings?"

