

BEHAVIOR · GRADES 2–6

# Class Reset Lesson

30 minutes to restore norms

## When to use this

Class behavior naturally drifts. Routines blur. Voice levels creep up. Lining up gets sloppy. Friendships strain. Most of the time, this is not a behavior crisis — it's normal entropy. A class reset is a 30-minute deliberate intervention to address the drift before it becomes a crisis. Use:

- AFTER A HOLIDAY when routines are rusty
- MID-TERM when energy is dipping
- AFTER A SPECIFIC INCIDENT involving most of the class
- WHEN YOU FEEL IT — that low-level grumbling, falling-outs, lost-focus feeling

A reset is not a punishment lesson. Don't frame it as 'we're doing this because you've been bad.' Frame it as 'we're checking in.'

## 30-minute structure

Time	Activity
0-3 min	Settle and frame: 'I want to spend half an hour today checking in on us as a class.'
3-8 min	What's working? Whole class brainstorm — quick, positive.
8-15 min	What's not working? Children write privately on paper.
15-22 min	Group themes from the writing into 3-4 areas of focus.
22-27 min	Agree 2-3 things we will all do differently.
27-30 min	Reset — fresh start. Hands in middle, signal of unity.



## Step 1 — Settle and frame (3 mins)

<p><b>Sit in a circle if possible</b></p> <p>Move desks. Visible to each other. The format signals 'this is different.'</p>	<p><b>Use neutral, factual language</b></p> <p>'I've noticed our class is feeling a bit off lately. Today we're going to talk about it. This isn't a telling-off.'</p>
<p><b>Establish trust</b></p> <p>'Whatever you say here will be respected. We're going to listen to each other. We're a team.'</p>	

## Step 2 — What's working? (5 mins)

<p><b>Start with positives</b></p> <p>'What's been going well in our class lately? What are we proud of?'</p>	<p><b>Take 6-8 contributions quickly</b></p> <p>Don't dwell. Validate each. Move on.</p>
<p><b>Why this comes first</b></p> <p>Children become defensive if 'reset' = 'tell us all the bad stuff.' Starting with what's working sets the right frame.</p>	

## Step 3 — What's not working? (7 mins)

<p><b>Private writing</b></p> <p>Each child writes on a slip of paper: 'One thing I think isn't working in our class.' No names. No accusations.</p>	<p><b>Why private</b></p> <p>Children are honest in writing in ways they aren't aloud. Quieter children get heard. No social pressure.</p>
<p><b>You collect them</b></p> <p>Read silently. Group similar concerns. Don't read out specific ones — summarise themes.</p>	

## Step 4 — Themes (7 mins)

<p><b>Identify 3-4 themes</b></p> <p>From the slips. 'Quite a few of you mentioned the noise level. Several of you mentioned falling-outs at break.'</p>	<p><b>Don't surprise yourself</b></p> <p>If a theme is 'we don't like Sam,' you don't read that out. Some things go to private conversations, not the circle.</p>
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<p><b>Be honest about your own role</b></p> <p>If you've been short-tempered, snappy, inconsistent — name it. 'I think I've been too quick to raise my voice. That's on me.'</p>	
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## Step 5 — Agreements (5 mins)

<p><b>Agree 2-3 specific things</b></p> <p>Concrete, achievable, observable. Not 'we'll be nicer' but 'we'll keep our voices at level 2 in groupwork.'</p>	<p><b>Children propose</b></p> <p>'What do we want to commit to? Three things, max.' They suggest. You shape.</p>
<p><b>Write them down</b></p> <p>Big paper. On the wall. Visible for the next two weeks. The class signs it.</p>	

## Step 6 — Reset (3 mins)

<p><b>Mark the moment</b></p> <p>'We're starting fresh today. Whatever was happening before, that's behind us.'</p>	<p><b>A small ritual</b></p> <p>Hands in the middle, count of three, 'team.' Or a shared phrase. Or a class clap. Something to bookend the reset.</p>
<p><b>Don't reference the slips again</b></p> <p>What was said in the circle stays in the circle. Don't bring up specific complaints later.</p>	<p><b>Hold the line for two weeks</b></p> <p>Refer back to the agreements daily. After two weeks, it's habit again. After a month, the reset has worked.</p>

## What NOT to do

- DON'T blame specific children even by implication. The reset is about US, not about THEM.
- DON'T announce consequences in the reset. ('From now on, anyone who \_\_\_ will...') Mixed message.
- DON'T promise rewards for behaving well. The reset isn't bribery — it's reflection.
- DON'T do this every fortnight. Frequent resets become hollow. Twice a term is plenty.
- DON'T do this without buy-in. If you're not committed to listening, children sense it. Skip it. Better to do nothing than fake it.

