

Small Moves, Big Impact: Simple Routines for Smooth, Active Instruction

The BIG Idea: Smooth, active instruction is built through small, repeatable moves that reduce uncertainty, protect instructional time, and keep students participating.

Use S.A.V.E. to protect instructional momentum

S - Structure routines	A - Articulate directions	V - Vary transitions	E - Engage continuously
Build routines students can follow independently to reduce uncertainty and repetition.	Use concise language plus visual or written reminders so expectations are easy to follow.	Use signals, timers, or established protocols to move between tasks without losing momentum.	Use frequent participation strategies, checks for understanding, and clear group-work expectations.

WHEN	STRATEGY	HOW IT HELPS
Before Instruction	Do It Again	If a routine does not meet the established expectation, calmly rehearse it again. The goal is practice, not punishment. Repetition helps expectations become habits students can carry out independently.
Before Instruction	Five in the First Five	Create a predictable opening sequence students can begin without waiting for repeated directions. The number and time are flexible: Three in the First Three, Four in the First Four, etc. The key is consistency.
During Instruction	Fist to Five	Use a zero-to-five hand signal as a quick CFU, confidence check, or time gauge. It gives every student a voice and can help you decide whether to reteach, extend work time, or transition.
During Instruction	Ask Three, Then Me	Before asking the teacher, students consult three available supports: peers, posted directions, notes, exemplars, or other approved resources. This builds independence and keeps the teacher available for higher-value support.
After Instruction	Five in the Last Five	Use a consistent closing sequence so students can wrap up learning, materials, and next steps efficiently. Just like the opening routine, the exact number and time can be adapted to fit the class.

