



The Cool Tool

Location: Playground

Expectation: Respect

Rationale: Some students play The Dozens (i.e., a planned insult match) because they think it is a fun way to show off their creativity and build self-control. It's not intended to be disrespectful, but sometimes it can get out of hand. The purpose of this lesson is to show when it's ok and not ok to play.

Initiating the lesson: When seeing students playing the Dozens (you know they are playing when they are appearing to enjoy it and no one is visibly aggravated), engage the students with some affirming comment like, "Wow! You think really fast!" (**VALIDATION AND AFFIRMATION**).

Explicit instruction (BUILDING, SITUATIONAL APPROPRIATENESS):

- Ask students what the playground expectations look like for respect.
- Explain that you know they are playing a game they find cool (**VALIDATION AND AFFIRMATION, IDENTITY**).
- Explain (or ask students to explain) why it could cause problems (e.g., some students may not understand it's a game, some may view it as disrespectful, some may react with physical aggression; **AFFIRMATION**).
- Ask students to identify when playing is and is not respectful provide practice identifying (**BUILDING, SITUATIONAL APPROPRIATENESS**).
- Teach an alternative acceptable behavior (e.g., "flip the script" and instead of insults, focus on academic knowledge or complements or other respectful concepts (**BUILDING AND BRIDGING**)).

Possible practice activities:

- Instead of insults, have students practice academic knowledge learned in the game. Instead of "your mom is so poor that..." try "I bet you didn't know that the Earth is 7900 miles in diameter" and use facts like that to play.
- Instead of insults have the students play with complements "You are so smart that Einstein learned from you" or "your mama's so pretty that..."
- Have students identify how the creativity could be shown in other classes because it's cool. "How can you show your creativity in music class?" (**BUILDING, SITUATIONAL APPROPRIATENESS**)
- Schedule a clean rap battle for the next recess – Rules for the battle must match playground expectations for respectful behavior though (**BRIDGING**).

Follow up:

- Acknowledge students for showing respect in different ways (**BRIDGING**).
- Reteach the discrimination and alternatives when students use behavior that is "not for school" (**BUILDING, SITUATIONAL APPROPRIATENESS**).
- Use data to assess the need to reteach Cool Tools or adjust the implementation plan (**DATA FOR EQUITY**).