

Workspace Norms for the Classroom: Creating a Community

Classroom norms are shared expectations that guide how students act—individually, with one another, and with classroom materials. They may include practices such as active listening, not interrupting, inviting others’ perspectives, and responsibly sharing resources.

Although norms are most effective when they are co-created with each class, the examples below are organized by age group to offer inspiration and starting points.

Primary (K–2)

- Use quiet voices so everyone can think.
- Share materials and take turns.
- Keep hands and feet in your own space.
- Put things back where they belong.
- Put your name/picture on the *help board* when you need help.

Elementary (3–5)

- Take care of materials and tech tools.
- Use kind, respectful language when working together.
- Take turns leading group tasks.
- Keep the workspace neat so everyone can find what they need.
- Solve small problems together before adding your name to the *help board*.

Middle School (6–8)

- Assign group roles (recorder, timekeeper, facilitator, etc.).
- Respect one another’s ideas by listening without interrupting.
- Use evidence and reasoning when giving feedback.
- Clean and reset the workspace for the next group.
- Stay on task to meet group deadlines.

High School (9–12)

- Begin work promptly and use time productively.
- Acknowledge and build on peers’ contributions.
- Maintain shared digital workspaces (naming files, version control).
- Balance speaking time so all voices are heard.
- Resolve disagreements constructively and professionally.