



No Opt Out is a practice to encourage students to answer when they are unable or unwilling to participate. This is one of the most helpful and efficient ways to raise classroom expectations and to create a culture of accountability. “In high-performing classrooms, a verbalized or unspoken ‘I don’t know’ is cause for action” (Lemov, 2010). Teachers must acknowledge the behavior and communicate the expectation that everybody must participate in the learning process. No Opt Out is a sequence that starts with a student who is incapable or reluctant to respond to a question and ends with the same student answering the question as often as possible (Lemov, 2010). This practice

- Give adequate wait time after asking a question.
- Support the student who does not know an answer, but clearly expect the student to get to the answer.
- Provide the answer; your student repeats the answer.
- Another student provides the answer; the initial student repeats the answer.
- Provide a cue; your student uses it to find the answer.
- Another student provides the cue: the initial student uses it to find the answer.
- Request another correct answer or an explanation of “why”.
- Add several more questions that add rigor in appropriate language for the students.
- Provide wait time when stretching questions.



Additional Tools

Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?

Make this fun by using the 'lifeline' format from the popular show. Students can phone a friend, poll the audience, or 50/50. Depending on the question, you could poll the class (like poll the audience) or eliminate choices (50/50). After the student uses the lifeline, the teacher has the original student share the correct answer. The key is to make the original student restate or rephrase the answer, so they are accountable for the right information.

Boomerang

When students cannot come up with an answer, ask them to "boomerang" the question to another student. When the other student answers, the "boomerang" comes back to the original student and he/she has to restate/rephrase the answer.

For more strategies and/or resources, visit houstonisd.org/EffectivePractices



ALERTS

This practice needs to be part of the classroom culture. Consistency is key to setting up expectations for students. Teachers must balance using No Opt Out against the need to keep lesson momentum going. Focus most on using this technique with questions closest to the learning objective.



QUICK TIPS

Consider allowing students to use resources such as books, anchor charts, or any material posted in the classroom to help students answer.