

Gathering Area

UNDERSTAND (Why?)

Meeting in a gathering area promotes engagement, collaboration, and active participation. It provides a comfortable and conducive environment for discussions, group activities, and interactive learning experiences. Most classrooms gather on the floor with the teacher sitting in front and the students facing the teacher. There may be times students need to stay at their desks or learning spots instead of gathering.

PREPARE (Students)

Good morning, everyone! Today, we're going to learn about gathering in our classroom's gathering area. The gathering area is a comfortable space where it is easier to hear each other and to stay focused. Here we can have discussions, do group activities, and enjoy learning together. Typically, our gathering area is on the floor with me sitting in front and all of you facing me. However, there may be times when you need to stay at your desks or learning spots instead of gathering, and that's okay too. Today, we'll practice how to gather in the gathering area smoothly and respectfully, so we can make the most out of our time together.

TEACH (Explicitly)

When you are at the gathering area, you will show certain behaviors as students, and I will show certain behaviors as the teacher so that all of us can learn by listening, sharing, and having fun. When we are at the gathering spot, I might ask you to do different activities. This could be listening to a story, working with a partner, participating in a discussion, or sharing with the group.

When working at the gathering area, you will:

- work and participate the whole time (write on chart under students)
- stay in one spot (write on chart under student)
- look at the person speaking (write on chart under student), and
- sit up quietly (write on chart under student).

While you students are showing these behaviors, I will be:

- working with students (write on chart under Teacher)

Select a student to come to the front of the gathering area and model the correct behaviors. Direct the class's attention toward the student who is modeling and point out each of the behaviors listed on the I-chart. Ask the class: Is _____ [student name] working and participating the whole time? Is _____ staying in one spot? Is _____ looking at the speaker? Is _____ sitting quietly? Then say, If _____ continues to do these things, will they learn by listening and sharing?

Then have a student model the incorrect behaviors. Stop and review each of the behaviors and ask the question: If this is what we do at our gathering spot will _____ learn by listening and sharing? No. Now show us the correct way.

The same student then models the correct behaviors. Again, point out each of the behaviors listed on the chart and ask the class: If this is what we do at our gathering area will _____ learn by listening and sharing? Yes!

Now, we are all going to practice. I am going to read a story and you are each going to practice using the correct behaviors we just learned.

Read a short read-aloud, paying attention to the gathering spot behaviors of the students. When you see students have less stamina, stop the read-aloud.

Let's check in to see how each of us did with the behaviors on our chart. This check-in is only for you and will help you decide which behaviors you are doing well and which will be your goal for the next time we meet in the gathering spot. Please put your hand in front of your chest. I am going to point to each of these behaviors, and you are going to indicate how proficient you were in practicing that behavior. You will hold up one finger if you found it hard to be independent with that behavior but you are going to work on it, two fingers if you feel you did okay at being independent with that behavior but you think you can do better, or three fingers if you were very independent with that behavior.

Have students rate themselves for working and participating the whole time, staying in one spot, looking at the person speaking, and sitting up quietly.

Based on how you checked in, what is your goal for the next time we prepare for a read aloud? What would you like to work on? Call on 1 or 2 volunteers to share their goal. Please tell your elbow partner what your goal is for the next time we are in our gathering area.

UNDERSTAND (Why?)

- Teach students about the importance of respecting personal space when sitting in the gathering area. Encourage them to sit comfortably while also being mindful of not encroaching on others' space, which helps maintain a positive and comfortable atmosphere.
- Emphasize the importance of active listening and participation while sitting in the gathering area. Encourage students to listen attentively to the speaker, raise their hands to contribute to discussions, and engage in group activities or discussions to make the most out of the learning experience.

Learn by
listening and
sharing

Gathering Area

Fun

Independent

Students

Teacher

**Work and participate
the whole time**

Stay in one spot

**Look at the person
speaking**

Sit up quietly

Work with students