

Chapter 5: Reflective Practice

As a way to form a connection with specific students, complete the the following actions.

Identify Students to Connect With

Fill out the chart in this section while completing the following steps.

1. Select three target students—students whom you have purposely chosen because you want them to change certain aspects of their classroom performance. The changes you desire for them can be in the areas of greater academic performance, more engagement, or more positive classroom behaviors.
2. In the first column, write the names of these three students.
3. In the second column, write at least two things that you have in common with these students. It is important that these similarities be things that involve your students' lives *outside* of school.

Important: You may find that you cannot complete the list. In other words, you may discover that you do not have at least two similarities for each of your students. If this is the case, then you will have to create similarities. If you have to do this, use the strategies described in this chapter.

Name of student 1:	Similarity 1: Similarity 2:
Name of student 2:	Similarity 1: Similarity 2:
Name of student 3:	Similarity 1: Similarity 2:

Remember, perceived similarity is only effective as an influence strategy if students are aware of the similarity they have with you. Therefore, it is essential that you spend some time discussing your areas of commonality. Do this in casual conversation where it arises naturally. Think hallways and the lunchroom or cafeteria. A casual inquiry such as, "Hey John, did you see that amazing three-pointer that clinched the game for the Lakers last night?" is far more effective than, "Hey John, do you know that I like basketball too?"

Engage in Mirroring With a Student

Select one of the three students you targeted in the chart. For one week, practice mirroring with this student. That is, deliberately repeat the last three words they say to you in the exact order they say them in several of your interactions with them throughout the week. This should appear natural, not automatic. You do not need to do this all of the time. Do this when you believe it will help the student to feel that you understand what they are saying and where they are coming from.

Use the following questions to record your observations.

- How did the student respond when you used mirroring in the conversation?
- In what ways, if any, do you feel your relationship with this student has been impacted by your use of mirroring?

Create Positive-Word Associations With a Student

Select a student in your class that you either don't like very much or the one student you like the least. For the next week, each day, think of one positive thing you have seen that student do or one positive thing you can say about that student. Complete the following chart with your thoughts and observations.

Student's name:	
Day of the week:	Positive comments or observations:
Monday	1. 2.
Tuesday	1. 2.
Wednesday	1. 2.
Thursday	1. 2.
Friday	1. 2.

After you complete this chart, ask yourself whether your feelings toward this student have changed. If so, in what ways? Think about sharing your chart with this particular student in some fashion if this feels comfortable to you. Doing so will likely have a positive impact on your relationship.