

Objective: Students think and begin to practice ways to know when they do not understand something in class or in a reading and need to ask for help.

Resources Needed for this Activity:

- PowerPoint [9_1.12 A4_PP Resources in YOUR School] identifying where kids can seek help. *This should be created by the school's Ramp-Up Leadership Team and should be provided by your Ramp-Up Coordinator*
- Paper copies of a handout listing the resources identified in the PowerPoint that can be distributed to students, posted on the school's website, and shared with families. *This should be created by the school's Ramp-Up Leadership Team and should be provided by your Ramp-Up Coordinator.*

Opening: 5 minutes - The advisor begins the class by asking who remembers what happened to Steve when he didn't understand something in math class. One or two students briefly recount the essence of the story.

The advisor then asks the students to signify by a show of fingers the number of times they asked for help this past week in classes. The advisor should then ask for volunteers or call on three students to share what they asked for help on or in what class.

Activity: 10 minutes - The advisor asks students to think individually about how they know they do not understand something in class. The following statement should be put on the screen:

"When you realize that you don't understand something important in class, what facial expression or body movement do you make?"

Students should be given a few moments to think of an answer to this question and should be told that only non-verbal (and non-vulgar) expressions or actions are allowed and appropriate.

Students are then asked to turn to a partner and share the expression or body movement they make.

Students are then told that if they think their partner had a good expression or body movement, they can nominate him or her to share it with the full class (students can't nominate themselves). Several students are asked to demonstrate their expressions or movements for the class.

The advisor tells the class that in high school it is critical for students to ask for help as soon as they need it (i.e. as soon as they make that expression or body movement for the first time). Students are asked to suggest ways in addition to facial expressions that they can know if they don't understand something in class. The group offers its own answers by raising hands.

The advisor then puts the following three questions on the screen and tells the group that these are three key questions to keep in mind when you're learning something new to be sure you fully understand it:

1. Is what the teacher is saying starting to sound like gibberish to me?
2. Could I do this on my own without help?

3. Could I explain or teach this to someone else without help?

Students are told that in addition to asking for help from their teachers, they can find help beyond their classrooms. The advisor should use the school's created PowerPoint to share with students lists of programs and resources to assist them in their high school and the larger community.

10 minutes - Role Play - Students can conduct a role play to help them practice reaching out for help and resources. One student will play a "person who can help" (based upon the list of helping people from your school's resource list), and the other student will play a student looking for help. After students finish, have them switch roles and try from the other perspective. Debrief activity when students are done.

Closure: 5 minutes - As the advisor passes out the school created handout of resources for assistance, students are reminded that while teachers and many others are there to help them when they don't understand something in class or in their homework or elsewhere, it is their responsibility to ask for help when they need it. The advisor should close this series by affirming that asking for help isn't a sign that the student is not smart - it's only *not* asking for help when you need it that is not smart.
