

**Help your
students
practice
responding
in a format
that
communicates
the
worthiness
of their ideas.**



FORMAT MATTERS

TEACHLIKEACHAMPION.COM

To practice your Format Matters, we've shared an excerpt from the Teach Like a Champion Field Guide 2.0 in the following pages. As it references a video clip, you may find that here:

bit.ly/FormatMattersAugust

FORMAT MATTERS (TECHNIQUE 14) helps teachers establish and uphold the expectation that students should consistently communicate in a format that is clear and complete when in school. To reinforce this standard of discourse, they respond to lapses efficiently and in a tone that's supportive and nonjudgmental. In the simplest form of Format Matters, teachers require students to format their responses in complete sentences that are grammatical and audible.

Complete Sentence Format

The complete sentence is the battering ram that knocks down the door to college. Insist that students express their ideas in complete sentences as often as possible to ensure that they get plenty of practice with this crucial skill. We've seen great teachers respond to incomplete sentences with one of the following methods:

- Reminding students before they start to answer ("Who can tell me in a complete sentence what the setting of the story is?")
- Providing the first words of a complete sentence ("The setting is . . .")
- Reminding students with a quick and simple prompt after they answer ("Complete sentence.")

Grammatical Format

- Ensure that students communicate with correct syntax, grammar, and usage. The following are two methods that may be especially helpful:
- Identify the error. Repeat the error back to the student as if you're asking a question. ("We was walking down the street?")
- Begin the correction. Begin repeating the answer back as if it were grammatically correct and ask the student to complete it. ("We were . . .")

Audible Format

Expect students to express their ideas loudly enough so that everyone in the class can hear and learn from them, especially when their comments are part of a discussion. One of the fastest ways to undercut the value of participation is to allow it to be inaudible to other students. This suggests to students that the ideas weren't important for classmates to listen to.

PLANNING TO UPHOLD FORMAT MATTERS

Select a crucial question from an upcoming lesson. Anticipate two incorrectly formatted answers that you might receive from students. Then script two corrections you might give to ensure that students provide answers in the correct format.

Your question: Target answer (in correct format):

An incorrectly formatted answer:

A Format Matters correction:

Another incorrectly formatted answer:

A Format Matters correction:
