

# TESA

## (Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement)

### (A Very Brief Cheat-Sheet for Teachers)

TESA is based on **teacher expectation theory**, namely that a teacher's expectations of student(s) can cause that teacher to treat that student differently. If a teacher perceives a student to be a high achiever, one set of teacher behaviors has been observed; if a teacher perceives a student to be a low achiever, a different set of teacher behaviors has been observed.

The goal of TESA is to help teachers become aware of their own behaviors towards their students through a systematic program and to give them the strategies to change that behavior

There are five TESA Strands that are listed below.

<b>TESA</b>	<b>INTERACTION</b>	<b>MODEL</b>
A. Response Opportunities	B. Feedback	C. Personal Regard
<b>1. A. Equitable Distribution</b>	<b>1. B. Affirm/Correct</b>	<b>1. C. Proximity</b>
<b>2. A. Individual Help</b>	<b>2. B. Praise</b>	<b>2. C. Courtesy</b>
<b>3. A. Latency</b>	<b>3. B. Reasons for Praise</b>	<b>3. C. Personal Interest and Compliments</b>
<b>4. A. Delving</b>	<b>4. B. Listening</b>	<b>4. C. Touching</b>
<b>5. A. Higher Level Questioning</b>	<b>5. B. Accepting Feelings</b>	<b>5. C. Desist</b>

The following is a brief overview of what each of these terms are, the research supporting the need for the strand and suggestions for teachers to implement in their own classrooms. It is highly suggested that teachers collaborate with a colleague whom they trust and set up observations of each other to see if their actions match their perceptions of their own classroom behavior.

## STRAND I

### 1. A. Equitable Distribution of Response Opportunities

#### What It Means

*Low achievers are less likely to be called upon by the teacher than high achievers.*

#### What The Research Says

- *More attention is given to boys than girls.*
- *Low level students see the teacher as giving more attention to high achieving students.*
- *Low achieving students are called upon less frequently than high achieving students.*

#### Suggestions For Teachers

- *Be mindful of offering the opportunity to answer equally among students.*

- *The teacher response should be public, specific and positive.*

## **1. B. Affirm/Correct**

### **What It Means**

*Teachers' responses to students' performance are a barometer for students to gauge how they are measuring up to the teacher's expectations.*

### **What The Research Says**

- *Specific feedback occurs more with high achievers than low achievers.*
- *African-American and Latino students receive more negative feedback and less attention from teachers than do Euro-American students.*
- *Providing negative feedback and ignoring students may negatively impact student achievement.*
- *Constant correction has the potential to lower student self-esteem.*

### **Suggestions For Teachers**

- *Limit your correction so that students don't fear their own judgments and over-rely on others.*
- *Avoid strong criticism, but do correct when needed.*
- *Use praise frequently along with correction.*

## **1. C. Proximity**

### **What It Means**

*Proximity refers to the location of students in the classroom and the distance between the student and the teacher.*

### **What The Research Says**

- *Low achievers are frequently placed farther from the teacher or in a group that receives less of the teacher's attention.*
- *Low achievers are frequently clustered in the rear corners of the room or in a group off to one side.*

### **Suggestions For Teachers**

- *Think about putting your students in a circle to create an open space so as to invite connection and suggest a community of learning.*
- *If you use rows, think of your room as an upside-down T and place your low achievers in the front and stem of the T so as to be at arm's length of your low achievers.*

## **STRAND 2**

### **2.A. Individual Helping**

#### **What It Means**

*Time for support by the teacher during class on a one-to-one basis*

### **What The Research Says**

- *High achievers and average students are often more aggressive in seeking the teacher's help.*
- *Teacher expectations may result in higher achievers getting more than their share of a teacher's time.*

### **Suggestions For Teachers**

- *Be mindful of your low achievers' need for help and the fact that they might not necessarily ask for it.*
- *The help should be specific and result in a student's improvement/understanding of his/her work.*

## **2. B. Praise**

### **What It Means**

*Saying something positive about a student's performance*

### **What The Research Says**

- *Teachers are less likely to praise perceived low achievers and more likely to criticize them for incorrect public responses.*
- *When low achievers do receive praise, it is often for marginal or inadequate public responses from a teacher who may be sympathetic rather than honest in his or her assessment e.g. "nice try".*
- *Praise is more effective than criticism.*
- *Frequent positive comments from teachers have the benefit of increasing students' positive self-talk.*
- *The quality of praise, not the quantity, has the most impact on students.*

### **Suggestions For Teachers**

- *Praise is more effective if given immediately after the accomplishment.*
- *Praise is likely to be effective if it is honest and consistent with the effort or amount of accomplishment.*
- *When praising:*
  - *Look at the student*
  - *Be aware of your voice tone*
  - *Call the student by name*
  - *Use appropriate humor*
  - *Be enthusiastic*
  - *Be honest*
  - *Be specific*

## **2.C. Courtesy**

### **What It Means**

*Courtesy is behavior that is attentive, considerate and thoughtful.*

### What The Research Says

- *The best and brightest students get the majority of teacher attention.*
- *Minorities and low achievers are frequently ignored, interrupted, spoken to harshly, reprimanded and given little encouragement.*
- *Teachers who demonstrated that they cared were most highly rated by students.*

### Suggestions For Teachers

- *Teachers can create a caring environment by:*
  - *Being honest*
  - *Communicating effectively*
  - *Being flexible*
  - *Being kind*
  - *Developing interpersonal relationships with their students*

## **STRAND 3**

### **3.A. Latency**

#### What It Means

*Latency applies to the time that elapses between asking a question and terminating the opportunity for a response.*

#### What The Research Says

- *Pausing three seconds or more after asking a question (wait time 1) and a student's response (wait time 2) increase the students' use of language and logic.*
- *The length of student responses increases 300-700% with wait time.*
- *There is an increase in higher-level thinking with wait time.*
- *The environment becomes more student-oriented with wait time.*
- *The variety of students participating voluntarily in discussions increases with wait time.*
- *Student confidence increases with wait time.*
- *Low achievers are allowed less wait time than high achievers.*

#### Suggestions For Teachers

- *Be mindful of adequate waiting both after your own question and after that of a student so as to allow for more participation and higher level thinking.*
- *Be mindful of allowing adequate wait time for all achievers.*

### **3B. Reasons for Praise**

#### What It Means

*Praise should focus on students' task related behavior and should imply that they have succeeded because they have the necessary skills and abilities to succeed and have applied the effort.*

#### What The Research Says

- *Some teachers rarely praise low achievers' success.*

- *Some teachers praise everything low achievers do, even responses that are incorrect.*

#### Suggestions For Teachers

*In giving praise, be reminded that praise should:*

- *Immediately follow the accomplishment*
- *Be specific to the accomplishment*
- *Be informative or appreciative*
- *Be individualized*
- *Be attributed to effort and ability*
- *Be given to low achievers as frequently as other students*

### **3.C. Personal Interest Statements and Compliments**

#### What It Means

*Recognition of a student's behaviors that are extraneous to the instructional tasks reflects a teacher's personal interest in the child.*

#### What The Research Says

- *Educators need to understand and relate to students as social beings as well as academic learners.*
- *Lower-income students felt that teachers disliked them personally and favored higher-income students.*
- *Visual cues (well dressed, well groomed, well supplied students) signals a higher socioeconomic class and increases the likelihood that students will receive more attention.*

#### Suggestions For Teachers

- *Get to know your students' interests and backgrounds and connect with them based on that information.*
- *To get to know outside information about students, you might ask, "How many of can relate a similar experience? Etc.*
- *Lesson plans that encourage students to make connections between the material presented and their lives enhance learning.*

## **STRAND 4**

### **4.A. Delving, Rephrasing and Giving Clues**

#### What It Means

*When students don't "get" the question, keep asking with supporting questions and clues so as to have students successfully answer*

#### What The Research Says

- *Low achievers are asked fewer questions than high achievers.*
- *Low achievers are frequently asked the easiest questions and let off the hook if they are hesitant or confused.*

- *Teachers are less apt to provide clues or to delve for the answers with low achievers because the teacher suspects that delving will be fruitless or fears that probing will embarrass the student.*

#### Suggestions For Teachers

- *Be mindful of calling on all students.*
- *To support students, think about rephrasing the question, providing a clue, providing additional information, asking a related question.*

### 4.B. Listening

#### What It Means

*Students tend to listen more than speak during the course of a lesson.*

#### What The Research Says

- *Teachers of high achieving students talked about 53% of the time.*
- *Teachers of low achieving students spoke about 80% of the time.*
- *More contact is made with males in the classroom.*

#### Suggestions For Teachers

- *Create the opportunity for student voices by negotiating curriculum, providing for different writing experiences (journaling, expository writing, building on different cultural identities)*
- *Make space for the opinions of others; pay attention to others*

### 4.C. Touching

#### What It Means

*Connecting with students emotionally*

#### What The Research Says

- *Appropriate touch (elbow of the student) can communicate warmth, support, caring and interest.*
- *Low achievers are touched (physically and emotionally) by teachers less than high achievers.*

#### Suggestions For Teachers

- *Touch students' hearts through the power of personal connection.*
- *These connections can include friendliness, learning names, using the collective "we" and "our"; using personal examples.*

## STRAND 5

### 5.A. Higher-Level Questioning

#### What It Means

*Students should be asked to probe and analyze more frequently than simply recalling facts*

#### What The Research Says

- *Lower achieving students are less-frequently asked higher level questions.*
- *If low achieving students cannot answer a question, little prompting is given to improve the quality of the response.*

#### Suggestions For Teachers

- *Train students to ask questions.*
- *Be mindful of asking probing questions to low as well as high achievers.*

### **5.B. Accepting Feelings**

#### What It Means

*Responses by teachers that are not judgmental but show that he or she recognizes the feelings underlying a particular behavior and acknowledges them.*

#### What The Research Says

- *Little classroom time is spent on feelings and interpersonal relationships.*

#### Suggestions For Teachers

- *Be alert to verbal and non-verbal feelings that students may be exhibiting.*
- *In your response to students, show that you know how he or she feels.*
- *Be mindful of connecting with where the student is emotionally, instead of criticizing.*

### **5.C. Desisting**

#### What It Means

*A teacher is doing something to stop a student's misbehavior.*

#### What The Research Says

- *Students feel safer in an environment where everyone is consistently held accountable for appropriate behavior.*
- *Student achievement decreases when negative personal behavior increases.*

#### Suggestions For Teachers

- *Be calm and cool when you stop the misbehavior of low achievers, just as you do with high achievers.*
- *Build relationships with students.*
- *Build an environment of mutual respect.*