

# 15 QUICK WAYS TO *Build Rapport with Students*

1. Always fist-bump, high five, or give (hand) hugs to your students (depending on your relationship with them). Appropriate physical contact is essential with building rapport.
2. Find something you like about every student you work with and continue to compliment them on those things.
3. Balance being a teacher/educator and a friend/mentor/good parent figure. Students want to talk to adults who they can relate with and be heard.
4. Do your best to understand the personal, social, emotional, financial, family, and other challenges your students are going through.
5. Learn and call students by their names as often as possible.
6. Remember little facts about your students and plug them into conversation. Learn about their interests, hobbies, and goals.
7. Learn their culture/lingo, but don't overdo it. Being relevant is important to them.
8. Be authentic. Don't try too hard to fit into their culture but make an effort to do so. If you don't know, you can ask them or do a little Google research.
9. Use relevant personal, funny, and embarrassing stories. Anytime you can incorporate slightly embarrassing/vulnerable stories or laugh at past challenges you had growing up, the better rapport you will build with them!
10. Chat with your students about their lives outside of class time.
11. Interact more, lecture less.
12. Praise and acknowledge your students more.
13. Treat students as an equal. No human is better than any other despite age, title, income, gender, race, etc.
14. Mindfully joke around with your students in your own authentic way. Avoid topics that may trigger insecurities such as: weight, body image, grades, income, family, etc.
15. Relate what you're teaching as much as possible with your student's personal lives.

## **Questions? Comments?**

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## **1. Ask your students what they care about.**

Being up-to-date with student trends is extremely advantageous to building rapport with students because it shows you care about them and it makes you relevant and relatable – things almost all students care about.

Ask questions like: “What’s your favorite artists, tv shows, movies, video games, or memes?” Follow up with, “Tell me more.” and understand why they care about that. Lastly, incorporate what they tell you into your lessons.

## **2. Tell them how they’ve impacted you.**

Students don’t hear enough how they impacted others or the world. They need people like you to be that source of light in their worlds. Acknowledge them as often as possible. Example: “Katie, because of you, I realized how important it is to not give up when times get tough. Thank you for that beautiful reminder. You are incredible.”

## **3. Learn from them.**

“The best teachers are students.” Although students always look towards us to learn, we are also learning from our students. Empower your students to teach on as many mini-lessons they can as. After all, our students are smarter than we are in many ways!

## **4. Be authentic.**

Students want to connect with real and relatable human beings.

## **5. Let them know they’re understood.**

Students want to be seen, heard, and understood. Low self-esteem and insecurity is on the rise with students and they need trusted individuals like you to remind them they’re not alone. Use phrases like: “I hear you.” “I understand.” “I can relate.” “You’re not alone.” For a full list of powerful phrases, visit: <http://richardkuo.com/resources>.

## **6. Thank them *daily*.**

Tell them why you're so grateful for them. Leave random personalized thank you notes or acknowledge them privately/in front of the class when someone does something extraordinary or powerful.

## **7. Give encouragement.**

Students can always use more encouragement. Keep using phrases like: "You are capable." "You can do it." "Everything will be okay." "You are smart." For a full list of powerful phrases, visit: <http://richardkuo.com/resources>.

## **8. Answer all their questions.**

Again, students want to be seen, heard, and understood. Our schedules can get very hectic and we may forget to answer a student's questions sometimes. Keep tabs of all the questions your students have and be sure to answer or at least acknowledge their question in some way.

## **9. Trust your heart and be willing to improvise.**

You probably already are an improvising pro. This is just a quick reminder that sometimes, following an agenda or a script doesn't provide the best learning results. If your intuition tells you that there is a better way for students to learn something, don't be afraid to try it out (and fail). More often than not, your intuition will be right. Trust yourself.

## **10. Build rapport by sharing your relatable, relevant, and funny stories.**

Students want to connect with educators who are relevant and relatable. When you vulnerably share your own relatable, relevant, and funny stories, they'll be able to know you're human just like they are and will want to listen to you more.

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