

WHY STUDENT VOICE IS VITAL IN THE CLASSROOM

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In traditional classrooms, students are often seen as passive recipients of knowledge, expected to listen, take notes, and follow instructions. However, modern education is gradually shifting toward a more inclusive and learner-centered approach, one that values the voices of students. Student voice refers to the thoughts, perspectives, and insights that students bring to their learning experiences. When students are encouraged to express themselves and participate in decisions that shape their education, the classroom becomes more dynamic, inclusive, and effective.

Empowering student voice does not mean relinquishing control of the curriculum. Rather, it means recognizing students as active contributors in their educational journey. It involves giving them opportunities to share opinions, offer suggestions, ask questions, and explore learning methods that resonate with them. When teachers genuinely listen, they foster mutual respect and trust. In turn, students feel valued, which boosts their motivation, engagement, and sense of responsibility.

Research consistently shows that students who feel heard perform better academically. They develop greater self-confidence, strengthen their communication skills, and take ownership of their learning. Even quiet or struggling learners can thrive when they realize their voices matter. Acknowledging student input not only enhances classroom participation but also nurtures a sense of belonging and purpose.

Moreover, student voice can help teachers improve instructional strategies. Feedback from students allows educators to adjust lessons to suit different learning styles, paces, and classroom needs. It can also foster deeper, more meaningful connections

between academic content and students' lived experiences, encouraging critical thinking and richer class discussions.

Fostering student voice doesn't require complex reforms. Simple yet impactful practices—like student-led activities, class discussions, suggestion boxes, or reflective sessions at the end of a lesson—can create space for students to be heard. What matters most is listening with intention and responding with respect.

In the long run, empowering student voice prepares learners to become active participants in a democratic society. They learn to express ideas, listen to others, and make informed decisions—skills that are as crucial in life as they are in school.

When students feel heard, they don't just learn better—they become better. That is why student voice is not an option or a luxury in education—it is a necessity.

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