

# The Six Step Choice Sequence

By Karen L. Erickson



1. **To an individual student misbehaving:** Side Coach quietly in their ear...describing the incorrect behavior... to stop the behavior. Do this if you are close enough to do so, if not go to step 2.
2. **To a repeating individual, individual too far away to side coach, or small group:** Side Coach openly to stop the behavior:
  - a. Say, “Excuse Me!” sharply while looking directly at the student(s) who are making poor choices.
  - b. If the behavior stops immediately say kindly, “Thank you.”
  - c. If the students look confused describe the specific behavior to be stopped, wait for them to self-correct, follow up with a kind, “Thank you,”
3. **If behavior repeats,** side coach openly to stop the behavior. Use the “Excuse me!”
  - a. Let the student know they drew your eye or ear and made you look at them. Say, “This tells me you were doing what?” Wait for the student to answer with what they were doing or by saying they were “showing off.”
  - b. Say, “If you are showing off it tells me you aren’t doing what?” Wait for the student to say, “Concentrating.”
  - c. Remind the student that if they aren’t concentrating then they won’t be able to do drama, create with a team, or participate, as it is the number one skill.
  - d. Give them two choices – ask if they would like to concentrate and stay in drama or if they would prefer to sit out and \_\_\_\_\_.
  - e. If they make the first choice to stay in drama, thank them and let them know you were hoping for that choice. (If they select the non-ideal choice jump to number five below.)
4. **If the behavior repeats again,** use the “Excuse me!” to get their attention and let them know they have just made **the other choice**. Have them follow through on that choice, leaving the drama area – watch as they begin to go to a designated area.



5. **Stop them** as they begin to leave and let them know that if they think they can make and carry through on the other choice (concentrating without showing off), you would like to have them return. They should let you know.
6. Don't let them return until they have gone to the designated area and thought about their behavior.
  - a. You might have a book of papers in that location that ask them to write and explain what they have done to be removed from the activity followed by a place where they can write other choices they could have made and concluding with a space where they can describe what they will do to correct the problem now or in the future. If they write about their behavior and why they think it resulted in their removal it gives you the opportunity to discuss their behavior with them later.
  - b. You might have other tasks available.

This process works so well for me that I have had students ask me to take a “time out” break as they know they are not concentrating and it will lead to negative choices. They then ask to return or join us when they are ready. They are in control.

It is also useful to know that the student s will always join us in the discussion circle at the beginning and end of class. I don't want the students to think that they are “bad.” I want them to focus on their poor choice of an action and how that impacts their participation in the drama activity. When it comes to the reflection time and the instructional time, they are once again included in the circle.

