



De-Escalation Scripts for Teachers



♡ Calm, respectful language for challenging moments ♡

#	Situation	Don't Say	Try Instead	Why It Works
1	Student can't follow a direction right now	"Don't talk to me like that!"	"I see you're upset. Let's take a minute. We can talk when you're ready."	Supports regulation
2	Student yells or slams materials	"That's it! You're in trouble!"	"That looks like a big feeling. Let's find a quieter way to handle it."	Focuses on emotions
3	Student debates or pushes back	"Stop arguing!"	"I want to hear you. Let's talk one at a time."	Builds respect & communication
4	Student avoids work	"Just try harder!"	"This feels hard right now. Let's break it into smaller steps."	Reduces overwhelm
5	Student shuts down	"Come back right now!"	"I'll stay nearby. Take your time. I'm here when you're ready."	Creates safety & trust
6	Student speaks in anger	"Watch your mouth!"	"I hear you're frustrated. Let's find calmer words together."	Teaches emotional expression
7	Student questions a rule	"I'm the teacher!"	"We both want things to go well. Let's figure this out together."	Builds collaboration
8	Student struggles with transitions	"Hurry up!"	"Transitions can be hard. Let's take it step by step."	Supports predictability
9	Student feels misunderstood	"Stop making excuses."	"Let's think about what you can do next."	Encourages self-reflection
10	Student needs to leave the space	"Go ahead and walk out!"	"I want you to be safe. Let's take a break and figure out the next step together."	Honors flight response & maintains connection

Teacher Notes — Quick Reminders

- ♡ Keep your voice calm and steady
- ♡ Use fewer words, not more
- ♡ Support first, correct later
- ♡ Offer simple choices
- ♡ Honor AAC and all forms of communication
- ♡ Reflect after, not during



Reflection Questions (Use After the Moment)

- ♡ What was happening for you?
- ♡ What was your body trying to tell you?
- ♡ What helped you feel better?
- ♡ What could help next time?
- ♡ What did you learn about yourself?
- ♡ What did I (the adult) need in that moment too?



♡ For PDA learners: reduce direct demands, offer choice, lower the stakes, prioritize safety over compliance. ♡



**You are not your hardest moments.
You are learning, growing, and moving forward.**

