

Appendix G: Personal Matrix (Behavior Dictionary)

A personal matrix (or behavior dictionary) is a tool classroom teachers can use to draw on student prior knowledge regarding behavior expectations (Validate and Affirm) and identify where connections need to be bridged and built. School personnel articulate expectations in the school setting, and students are asked to reflect on expectations in other settings in their lives. This dictionary can be used to help reteach and to help students learn to code-switch while allowing teachers to learn how the expectations may have been taught to fluency previously.

In the example below, the school wide expectations are identified and are operationalized in the “at school” column for students. Students are then asked to complete the At Home and In my Neighborhood columns individually.

This activity allows school personnel to check for prior knowledge and understand where there may be cultural gaps between home and school, and where additional instruction may be necessary.

School-wide Expectation	At SCHOOL It looks like...	At HOME It looks like...	In my NEIGHBORHOOD it looks like...
Be Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to self Tell an adult if there is a problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect your friends and family Don't talk back 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stick up for your friends Don't back down Look the other way
Be Respectful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treat others how you want to be treated Include others Listen to adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do exactly what adults tell you to do Don't stand out Don't bring shame 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text back within 30 seconds Be nice to friends' parents Share food
Be Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do my own work Personal best Follow directions Clean up messes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help your family out first Own your mistakes Share credit for successes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have each other's backs Own your mistakes Check in about what to do

Personal Matrix Activity

Participants: Students

Purpose: To assist students (and staff) in identifying how expectations may vary across settings and assist staff in identifying specific expectations that may require revision and/or reteaching.

Time: 15-30 minutes

Materials needed: For each student, a personal matrix (below) with the school-wide expectations listed in the first column and specific examples (or rules) in the At School column (often from an “All Settings” section of the school-wide matrix). The At Home and In my Neighborhood columns are left blank.

Steps:

1. Ask students about the purpose of expectations (e.g., so we can all agree on how we are supposed to act with each other) and ask or explain how expectations may be different depending on where we are (e.g., running is ok outside but not in the classroom).
2. Review the school-wide expectations and specific examples with students.
3. Discuss how expectations might be different at home compared to school (e.g., do you raise your hand to talk at the dinner table?). Ask students to write down multiple examples of following each of the expectations at home. Students' answers are expected to vary.
4. Discuss how expectations might be different in their neighborhood with their friends compared to school or home. Ask students to write down multiple examples of how their friends expect them to behave. If students have difficulty, point out specific examples at school and ask whether that's what they are supposed to do at home too. Students' answers are expected to vary.
5. Ask students to compare the examples in each row and share similarities and differences in expectations across settings.
6. Have students practice the examples at school and tell them you will remind them to switch to school expectations if they need extra help (e.g., “remember how we do it at school”).

Alternative Approaches: Leave the expectations and/or the At School specific expectations columns blank and have students generate them as a review and check for understanding.

Following on: For students with large differences across columns, focus on additional teaching and practice.

Where differences are identified between school and other settings, school personnel can reflect on the following question:
 Are the “different” school rules necessary for positive student development?

- If NO, change the school expectations to align them more closely with the home and neighborhood.
- If YES, Acknowledge these differences explicitly and provide additional teaching, practice, and acknowledgment to code-switch effectively.

School-wide Expectation	At SCHOOL It looks like...	At HOME It looks like...	In my NEIGHBORHOOD it looks like...
	• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •
	• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •
	• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •

Specific Routine Personal Matrix

The same concept can be used to teach classroom procedures. Assuming the procedures are taught to fluency first, the staff would then review what was taught, then check for prior knowledge and understanding with the students. The following example shows a personal matrix for independent seat work.

During independent seat work at school, the expectation is for me to work quietly by myself.

At HOME It looks like...	At SCHOOL It looks like...	In my NEIGHBORHOOD it looks like...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get a snack • Go to the kitchen table • Follow the directions • Ask my brother if I need help • Go play when done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit at my desk • Use a volume level of "1" • Try every problem • Work until the teacher says to stop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do I know I'm doing it right? • What do I do when I'm done?

Specific Routine Personal Matrix Activity

Participants: Students

Purpose: To re-teach a specific classroom routine that has previously been taught but students are not yet fluent with following the expectations.

Time: 15-30 minutes

Materials needed: For each student, a specific routine worksheet (below) with the routine and expectations already identified (in the blanks).

Steps:

1. Ask students to write down how they would do this routine at home. Ask them to complete the first column. Students' answers are expected to vary.
2. Ask students to state what the specific expectation for the routine looks like in the classroom. It may be more effective to re-teach this specific routine instead of asking students.
3. Ask students to identify any questions they may have about how to complete the routine in school. Answer the questions as a class.

Alternative Approaches: Start with the school column and then ask about home.

Following on: For students with large differences across columns, focus on additional teaching and practice.

During independent seat work at school, the expectation is for me to work quietly by myself.

At HOME It looks like...	At SCHOOL It looks like...	In my NEIGHBORHOOD it looks like...
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•