

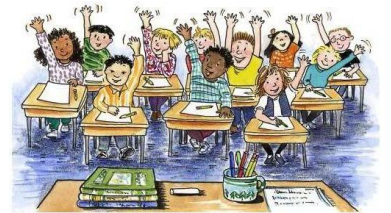
ELTA Online Training

Title:

**Using the SMART Strategy to Improve
Classroom Management**

7 April 2026

Using SMART Learning Objectives to Improve Classroom Management

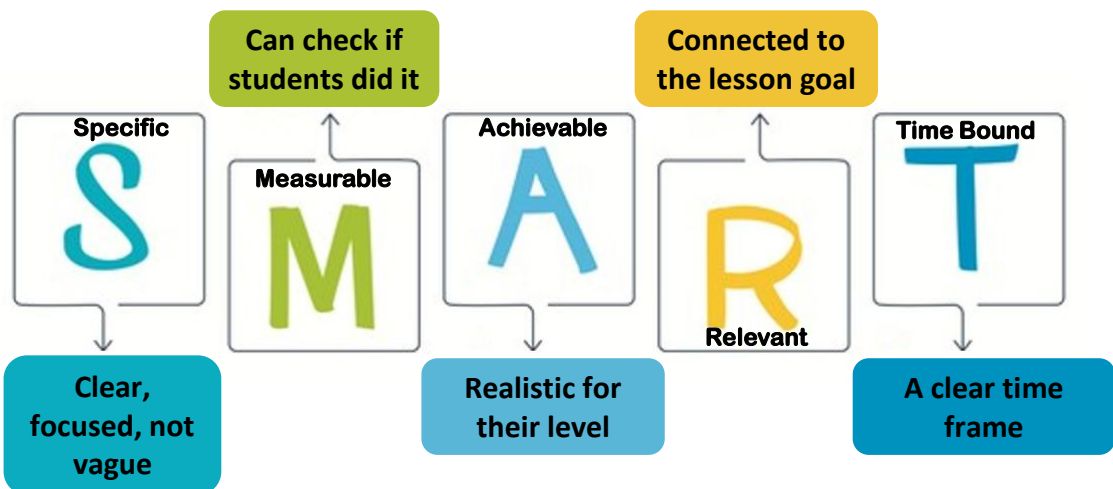


Some of you joined us for the previous session on SMART objectives, and some of you are new —

welcome.

Today's lesson builds on that foundation, but don't worry, we'll do a quick refresher so everyone starts on the same page.

Micro-Recap: What Are SMART Objectives?



Recap:

Instead of:

“Students will practice speaking.”

Try:

“Students will ask and answer **three questions** with a partner in **5 minutes.**”

Linking SMART Objectives to Classroom Management

When we set SMART objectives, we're not only planning learning — we're also shaping behavior.

Clear objectives tell students

- ✓ *what to do,*
- ✓ *how to do it,* and
- ✓ *how long they have.*

When expectations are clear, behavior becomes easier to manage.

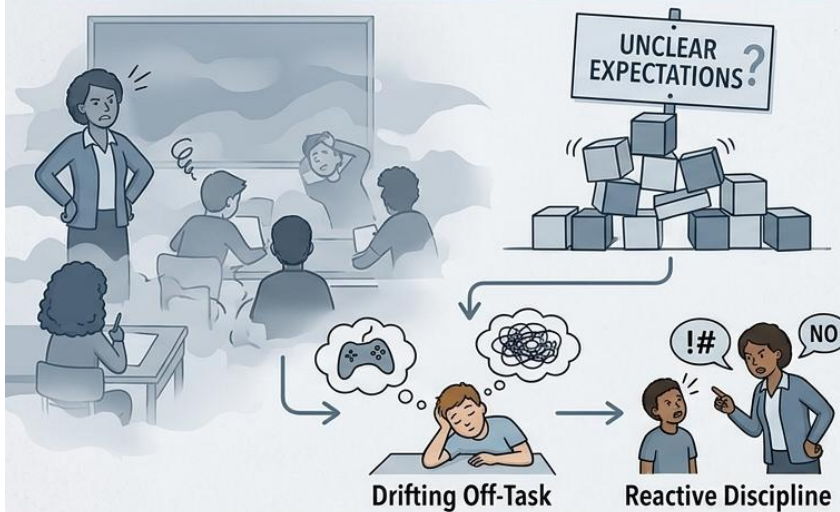
How does that work in practice:

✓ *what to do,* ✓ *how to do it,* and ✓ *how long they have.*

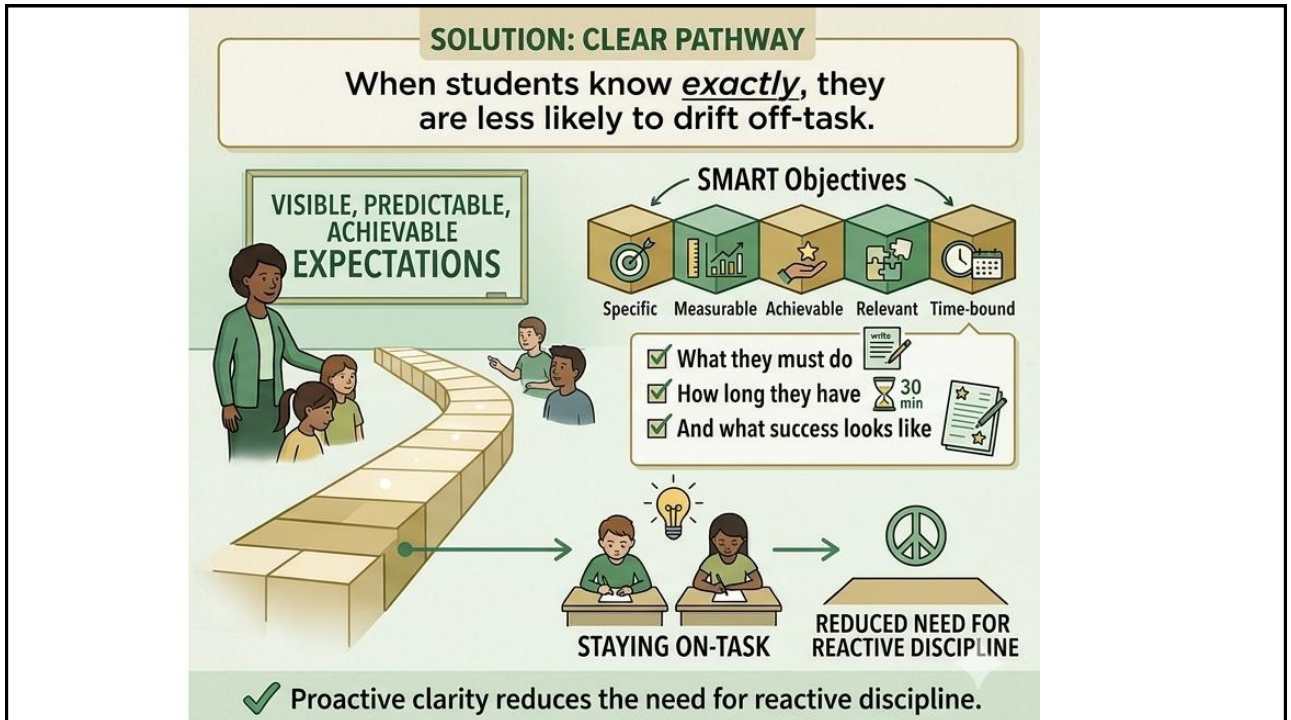


PROBLEM: UNSTEADY FOUNDATION

Classroom management problems often arise from unclear expectations.



✗ Proactive clarity reduces the need for reactive discipline.



Some Practical Classroom Examples

Example A

A Vague vs SMART Objective

Give Clear Instructions

VAGUE OBJECTIVE
"Students will practice reading."

Unmeasured, floating timeline

Blurred, generic reading book

Singular, isolated

Definition book

- Students don't know how long, how much, with whom, or what "practice" means

Example A

A Vague vs SMART Objective

Give Clear Instructions

SMART OBJECTIVE
"Students will read one short paragraph in pairs and underline **three** new words in **5 minutes**."

Paragraph 1

- Word 1
- Word 2
- Word 3

Countdown

Definition book

Pairs/ Collaboration


- Students know the task, the time, the outcome, and the behavior expected

Example B A Vague vs SMART Objective

Reducing Noise in the Classroom

VAGUE OBJECTIVE

Vague:
"Work together on the worksheet."




Students talk too much and others lose interest.

Example B A Vague vs SMART Objective

Reducing Noise in the Classroom

SMART OBJECTIVE

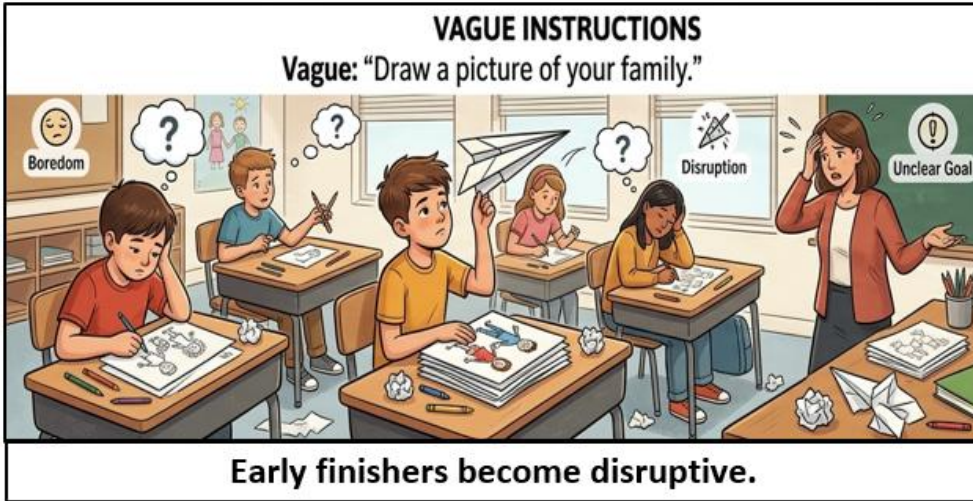
SMART:
"Work in pairs to complete questions 1-3 in 6 minutes, using quiet voices so other groups can focus."



Behavior is built into the task.

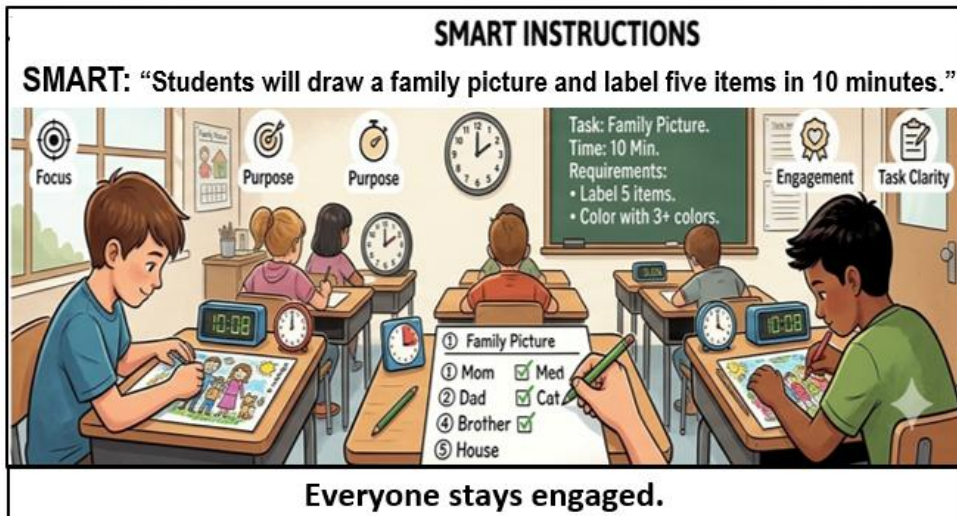
Example C A Vague vs SMART Objective

Preventing Off-Task Behavior



Example C A Vague vs SMART Objective

Preventing Off-Task Behavior



Breakout Rooms (6 Rooms, 15 minutes)

Purpose:

ELTAs collaboratively design SMART objectives that *directly support classroom management* in realistic teaching scenarios. Each room receives a different hands-on task.

Breakout Room Tasks (6 Rooms)

Each group must:

1. Rewrite the scenario's vague objective into a SMART objective.
2. Explain how their SMART objective improves classroom management.
3. Prepare a 2-minute report.

Room 1 — Managing Noise Levels

Scenario

Students often become noisy during group work.

Your Task

Work together to create a SMART objective that helps keep group-work noise at an appropriate level.

Steps

- Identify the learning task students are completing.
- Decide what “quiet voices” or “inside voices” mean in measurable terms.
- Set a clear output students must produce (e.g., finish questions 1–3).
- Add a realistic time limit.
- Combine these into one SMART objective.

Discussion Prompts

- How will students know what noise level is expected?
- How does your objective reduce noise and keep students focused?
- How will the teacher check if the objective is met?

Your Group Must Produce

1. A SMART objective
2. A short explanation of how it improves classroom management
3. A 2-minute report for the plenary

Room 2 — Managing Transitions

Scenario

Students take too long to move from carpet time to desk work.

Your Task

Create a SMART objective that makes the transition clear, quick, and calm.

Steps

- Define what “ready at your desk” looks like.
- Decide on a realistic time limit for the transition.
- Include behavior expectations (e.g., walking quietly, no talking).

- Combine these into one SMART objective.

Discussion Prompts

- What actions must students take during the transition?
- How will the teacher know the transition was successful?
- How does this reduce wasted time?

Your Group Must Produce

1. A SMART objective
2. A short explanation of how it improves classroom management
3. A 2-minute report for the plenary



Room 3 — Managing Materials

Scenario

Students waste time collecting books, pencils, or worksheets.

Your Task

Create a SMART objective that explains how materials should be collected and used efficiently.

Steps

- Identify which materials students need.
- Decide the best method for collecting materials (e.g., group leader, row system).
- Set a time limit for collecting materials.
- Combine these into one SMART objective.

Discussion Prompts

- What is the calmest and fastest way to get materials?
- How does your objective prevent chaos or delays?
- How will students know they’ve done it correctly?

Your Group Must Produce

1. A SMART objective
2. A short explanation of how it improves classroom management
3. A 2-minute report for the plenary

Room 4 — Managing Pair Work

Scenario

Some students dominate pair work while others stay silent.

Your Task

Create a SMART objective that ensures equal participation during pair work.

Steps

- Define what equal participation looks like (e.g., each student asks 2 questions).
- Decide on a clear turn-taking structure.
- Set a time limit for the pair activity.
- Combine these into one SMART objective.

Discussion Prompts

- How can participation be made measurable?
- How does your objective reduce dominance or passivity?
- How does this help the teacher monitor behavior?

Your Group Must Produce

1. A SMART objective
2. A short explanation of how it improves classroom management
3. A 2-minute report for the plenary



Room 5 — Managing Early Finishers

Scenario

Fast finishers become disruptive while waiting for others.

Your Task

Create a SMART objective that includes a clear extension task for early finishers.

Steps

- Identify the main task students must complete.
- Decide on a specific extension task students can do independently.
- Ensure the extension task is achievable and relevant.
- Combine these into one SMART objective.

Discussion Prompts

- How does the extension task keep fast finishers engaged?
- How does this reduce disruptions?
- How will students know what to do next?

Your Group Must Produce

1. A SMART objective
2. A short explanation of how it improves classroom management
3. A 2-minute report for the plenary

Room 6 — Managing Movement in the Classroom

Scenario

Students frequently leave their seats without permission.

Your Task

Create a SMART objective that defines when and how students may move around the classroom.

Steps

- Identify when movement is necessary (e.g., sharpening pencils).
- Define clear rules for movement (e.g., one student at a time).
- Decide how to make this measurable and time-bound.
- Combine these into one SMART objective.

Discussion Prompts

- What movements are allowed, and when?
- How does your objective prevent unnecessary wandering?
- How will students know if they are following the rules?

Your Group Must Produce

1. A SMART objective
2. A short explanation of how it improves classroom management
3. A 2-minute report for the plenary

30–50 min — Plenary Reports (20 minutes)

Purpose:

Groups share their SMART objectives and explain how these support classroom management.

Structure:

- **6 groups × 3 minutes each**
 - 2 minutes to present
 - 1 minute for trainer clarification or reinforcement

Focus on the following:

- How does your objective reduce confusion?
- Which part of your objective makes behavior measurable?
- How would this objective reduce the need for discipline?
- Is the time frame realistic for elementary learners?

Review & Consolidation (10 minutes)

Purpose:

Reinforce the connection between **SMART objectives** and proactive **classroom management**.

Remember the following Points:

- SMART objectives tell students exactly **what they need to do**, which helps prevent misbehavior.
- When tasks are **clear and measurable**, students stay focused and take responsibility.
- Setting a **time limit** keeps the lesson moving and avoids wasted learning engagement.
- You can include **behavior expectations** directly in the learning goals.
- Being **clear from the start** reduces the need for discipline later.

Final Reflection Question (Whole Group)

“How do you feel the SMART strategy (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) will help you to manage your classroom in the future —and why?”

Answer Key: Model SMART Objectives

Room 1 — Managing Noise Levels

Scenario: Students often become noisy during group work.

Model SMART Objective

“Students will work in groups of four to complete **questions 1–3** on the worksheet in **6 minutes**, using **quiet inside voices** so that other groups can focus.”

Why does this improve classroom management

- “Quiet inside voices” is a **specific, measurable behavior**.
- The **time limit** keeps students focused and reduces wandering.
- A clear **output** (questions 1–3) prevents off-task chatting.
- Students know exactly what to do and how to behave.

Room 2 — Managing Transitions

Scenario: Students take too long to move from carpet time to desk work.

Model SMART Objective

“Students will move from the carpet to their desks and sit with their **English books open on page 12** within **30 seconds**, walking **quietly** and without talking.”

Why this improves classroom management

- Defines what “ready” looks like (book open, page 12).
- Sets a **clear time frame** for the transition.
- Behavior expectations (quiet, no talking) reduce chaos.
- Students know exactly what to do during transitions.

Room 3 — Managing Materials

Scenario: Students waste time collecting books, pencils, or worksheets.

Model SMART Objective

“Within **1 minute**, the **group leader** in each group will collect **one worksheet for each student** and place them on the table while all other students remain **seated with pencils ready**.”

Why this improves classroom management

- Assigns a **specific role** (group leader).
- Reduces unnecessary movement.
- Time limit keeps the pace efficient.
- Students know exactly what to do and what not to do.

Room 4 — Managing Pair Work

Scenario: Some students dominate pair work while others stay silent.

Model SMART Objective

“In pairs, each student will **ask and answer two questions** from the speaking card in **5 minutes**, taking turns so both students speak equally.”

Why this improves classroom management

- Participation is **measurable** (two questions each).
- Turn-taking is built into the objective.
- Prevents one student from dominating.
- Helps the teacher monitor engagement easily.

Room 5 — Managing Early Finishers

Scenario: Fast finishers become disruptive while waiting for others

Model SMART Objective

“Students will complete **sentences 1–3** in **10 minutes**. Early finishers will quietly complete the **extension task** by writing **two extra sentences** using the new vocabulary.”

Why this improves classroom management

- Early finishers have a **clear, meaningful task**.
- Reduces boredom and disruptive behavior.
- Keeps all students engaged until the teacher moves on.
- The extension task is measurable and relevant.

Room 6 — Managing Movement in the Classroom

Scenario: Students frequently leave their seats without permission.

Model SMART Objective

“During the writing activity, students will remain seated. Only **one student per row** may stand to sharpen a pencil, and only during the **first minute** of the task.”

Why this improves classroom management

- Defines **when** movement is allowed.
- Defines **how many** students may move.
- Prevents unnecessary wandering.
- Makes movement predictable and easy to monitor.