



# Engageli for Middle School (Grades 6-8)

## Best Practices for Online Classrooms



Middle school students do best in environments that encourage peer interaction, independence, and creativity. While students this age are developing stronger critical thinking and teamwork skills, they still need guidance to stay engaged and on-track.

This guide outlines best practices for using Engageli with middle school students.

### Set clear expectations and routines

Middle schoolers benefit from clear guidelines and predictable routines that help them stay on task. Teachers should set expectations and policies at the beginning of the term and provide regular reminders about appropriate virtual classroom behavior.

- **Set expectations at the start of each class.** Clearly define participation norms, such as using chat respectfully, staying on-topic in discussions, and completing table activities. Creating a classroom contract collaboratively with your students and asking them all to sign is a great way to increase buy-in.
- **Make sure students understand Engageli's tools.** Spend time at the beginning of the term introducing features like tables, chat, polls, whiteboards, Q&A, note-taking, and collaborative documents. Show where to find them and the participation expectations around each.



- **Use structured transitions between activities.**  
Use clear verbal and visual cues to help students shift focus. Use Engageli's timer feature to set time limits for activities, helping students learn to manage their work efficiently.
- **Use action tags to structure class activities.**  
Pre-set activities with Engageli's action tags to reduce the live burden on the teacher and keep the class moving smoothly.
- **Manage classroom flow with the waiting room.**  
Admit students in an organized manner and provide a break space when needed to maintain supervision and class order. This makes sure middle schoolers are never alone in the classroom without supervision.

- **Use Engageli's microphone control features** to avoid everyone speaking at once:
  - Mute all students during instruction.
  - Unmute students one at a time for structured responses.

**For more ideas on effectively managing your classroom in Engageli, check out our detailed classroom management guide.**

## Provide frequent opportunities for peer collaboration and interaction

Middle schoolers need structured opportunities to collaborate with peers. Engageli supports discussion-based learning while allowing teachers to monitor participation effectively.



### Use Engageli tables for collaborative learning

Assign students to tables and encourage them to collaborate on structured tasks before whole-class discussions. Mix groups easily by splitting the class using an Engageli poll, either by similar or different answers.

### Monitor and guide table discussions

Keep table chat visible to ensure students stay on-task and engaged. Use the Peek and Join features to observe collaboration and step in when necessary. If students are off-topic, send a message to refocus them. If a group is not engaging, intervene with a prompt: "Table 2, I noticed you haven't started your discussion yet — o you have any questions?"

### Use polls and reactions for quick check-ins

Use Engageli's quick polls and emoji reactions to quickly gauge understanding and encourage student input. Review responses in real-time and address misconceptions.





## Monitor and support student engagement

Engageli's real-time engagement tracking helps teachers identify both highly engaged students and those who need additional support.

### Use engagement metrics to monitor participation

Regularly check who is most and least engaged and adjust strategies accordingly. If a student's engagement is low, follow up with them privately. For example: "Hey Alex, everything okay? Need any help?"

Another helpful strategy for re-engaging passive learners is direct involvement. If a student is disengaged, call on them with an approachable question. For example: "Sarah, what do you think about the point your tablemate just made?"

### Encourage non-verbal participation

Provide multiple ways for students to participate. Recognize that some students may not feel comfortable speaking on camera. If the school allows, provide the option for students to occasionally turn off their video.

Use directed chat prompts, polls, reactions, Q&A threads, and collaborative documents to give students varied options for engagement. For example, if students are hesitant to speak, prompt them to respond in chat or with reactions, "If you agree with this statement, use the thumbs-up reaction."



## Encourage digital literacy and independent learning

Middle school is a time for students to develop responsible online learning habits. Engageli provides structured tools that help students transition to digital collaboration.

- **Familiarize students with collaborative projects using shared documents.** Use Engageli documents for group brainstorming, note-taking, or project-based learning.
  - **Example:** “Each table has 15 minutes to write a paragraph about your assigned historical event. We’ll then compile them into a class timeline.”
- **Encourage peer-led discussions.** Assign table leaders to summarize discussions or present ideas in front of the wider class using the Engageli podium.
  - **Example:** “Each table, select a discussion leader to summarize your group’s ideas.”
- **Incorporate videos into lessons.** Short, engaging videos can reinforce concepts for students with a more visual learning style. Add them to your classroom slides to introduce new topics or scaffold learning.
- **Allow choice in assignments.** Providing multiple ways for students to demonstrate learning increases motivation.
  - **Example:** “Write a paragraph, create a short video, or design a slideshow to present your findings.”
- **Balance structure and flexibility.** Establish a clear lesson structure while allowing room for creativity and student input.
  - **Example:** “Here’s our goal for today’s session - how do you think we should approach it?”



Engageli helps middle school students stay engaged, interact with their peers, and develop digital collaboration skills — all while making learning fun!

