



Thank you

FOR YOUR
INTEREST IN
CORWIN

Please enjoy this complimentary excerpt from Transform Your Math Class Using Asset-Based Teaching for Grades 6-12.

[LEARN MORE](#) about this title!

WHAT'S THE ROLE OF STRUCTURAL ROUTINES IN FOSTERING ASSETS-BASED LEARNING?

Structural routines are the various parts of the lesson that shape the flow of what students and teachers do in a class period regularly. Although the flow does not have to be the same chronologically from day to day, when a structural routine is being implemented, students understand the expectations and know what to do. The teacher identifies structural routines and are most effective when they share the intentions and reasoning behind the routine with students. When implemented as intended, structural routines are what make the class run like a well-oiled machine. Classrooms lacking clarity with structural routines can look chaotic and frustrating, with students sometimes unsure as to what they should currently be doing and with whom they should be doing it (Leinhardt, 2001; Leinhardt & Steele, 2005). For many years, I (Joleigh) used several structural routines simply because it was part of my training and/or what my colleagues did. When asked, I could also justify why I used them, but hardly ever did I think about how my implementation of these routines sent unspoken (and unintended) messages that sometimes conflicted with my beliefs about mathematics. When I speak with colleagues about this, our conversations often end up concluding that there is never enough time to get to everything. This ultimately led to two main questions about structural routines and where they fall on the deficit-to-asset continuum. How much time is appropriate for different structural routines? How does the implementation of the routines impact student outcomes?

We're going to discuss some of the most common structural routines used in classrooms (e.g., warm-ups retrieval, homework, instructional routines, assessment, and exit tickets) and consider our current implementation to determine where they fall on the deficit-to-asset continuum by asking the following questions:

- How are the products of our activities useful/helpful to students?
- What unspoken messages do we send?
- Do these activities promote a sense of belonging, or do they unintentionally send messages about mathematics that conflict with our beliefs about who is capable of doing mathematics?

Structural routines implemented from an asset-based perspective intentionally position students for success, support their growth in responsible decision-making, and build student agency and identity. Structural routines implemented from a deficit-based perspective often send messages about math and students that are in conflict with our beliefs about students and their learning. Take a look at Table 5.1, which lists some common structural routines, with descriptions.

TABLE 5.1 Structural Routines and Their Descriptions

STRUCTURAL ROUTINES	DESCRIPTION
Warm-ups	Beginning of class activity
Homework or Practice Sets	Independent practice problems
Instruction	Pedagogical decisions of teaching approaches and how they affect learners
Exit Ticket	End of class activity
Assessment during instruction	Informal understanding of student learning Focus on what students know (listening to students) vs. do not know (asking funneling questions to generate a specific response that lets the student know they should think like the person asking the question)
Assessment after instruction: quiz, test	Formal assessment of student learning
Student self-assessment	Student identifies areas of strength and areas of needed improvement