

SCIENCE ^{OF} LEARNING

CONFERENCE 2025

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Insights into Classroom Management

Dr Mark Dowley

Dr. Mark Dowley

- Amazon Best Selling Author: Classroom Management Handbook
- Associate Head of the Crowther Centre for Applied Education Research
- Chair: Mastery Schools Victoria
- Senior Fellow: Centre for Coaching, Mentoring and Professional Learning (UK)
- Still teach



Today



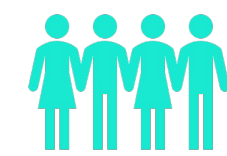
Challenges

- Evidence
- Current reality



Principles

- Behaviour
- Habits



Practical strategies

- Tools
- Routines

Challenge of Behaviour in Schools

OECD, 2023

By international standards, Australia has some of the most disruptive classrooms in the world. On the OECD's index of disciplinary climate, Australia ranked 70 out of 81 nations surveyed when it came to classroom discipline. (OECD, 2023)

New Zealand = 66

UK = 34

USA = 28

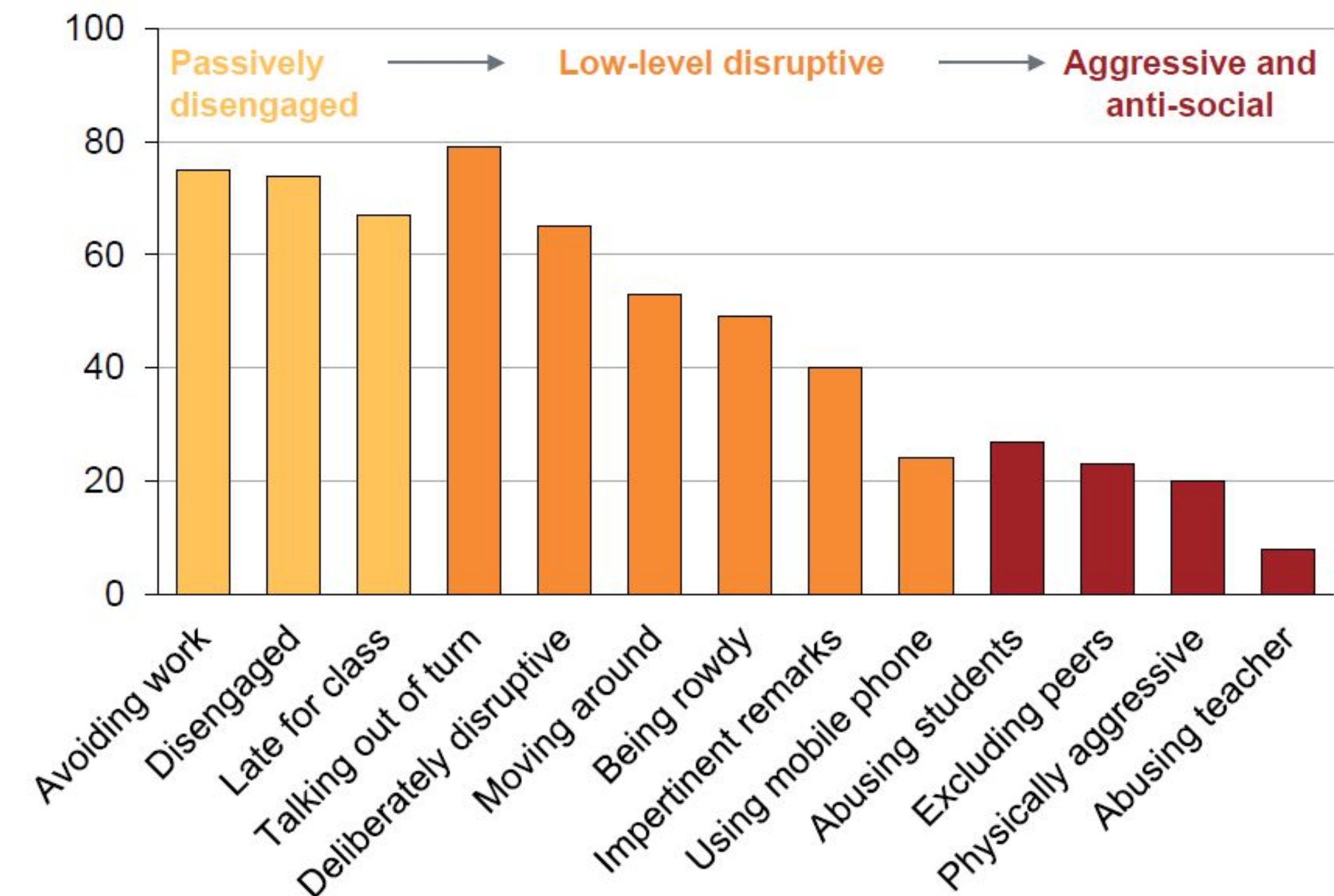
Korea and Kazakhstan = 1 & 2

Behaviour

Grattan Institute

- Avoiding work
- Disengaged
- Late for class
- Talking out of turn

Figure 2.2: Passive disengagement and disruption are common
Percentage of teachers who report behaviours occurring 'almost daily', 'daily' or 'several times daily'



Source: Sullivan et al. (2014).

Turn and talk

What are some of the common behavioural challenges you have experienced?



Why engagement?

- Student engagement: “student’s active participation in academic and cocurricular or school-related activities, and commitment to educational goals and learning”.
- Student engagement was strongly associated with:
 - Academic Achievement ($r = .33$)
 - Subjective Wellbeing ($r = .35$)

Today



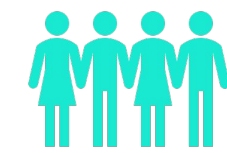
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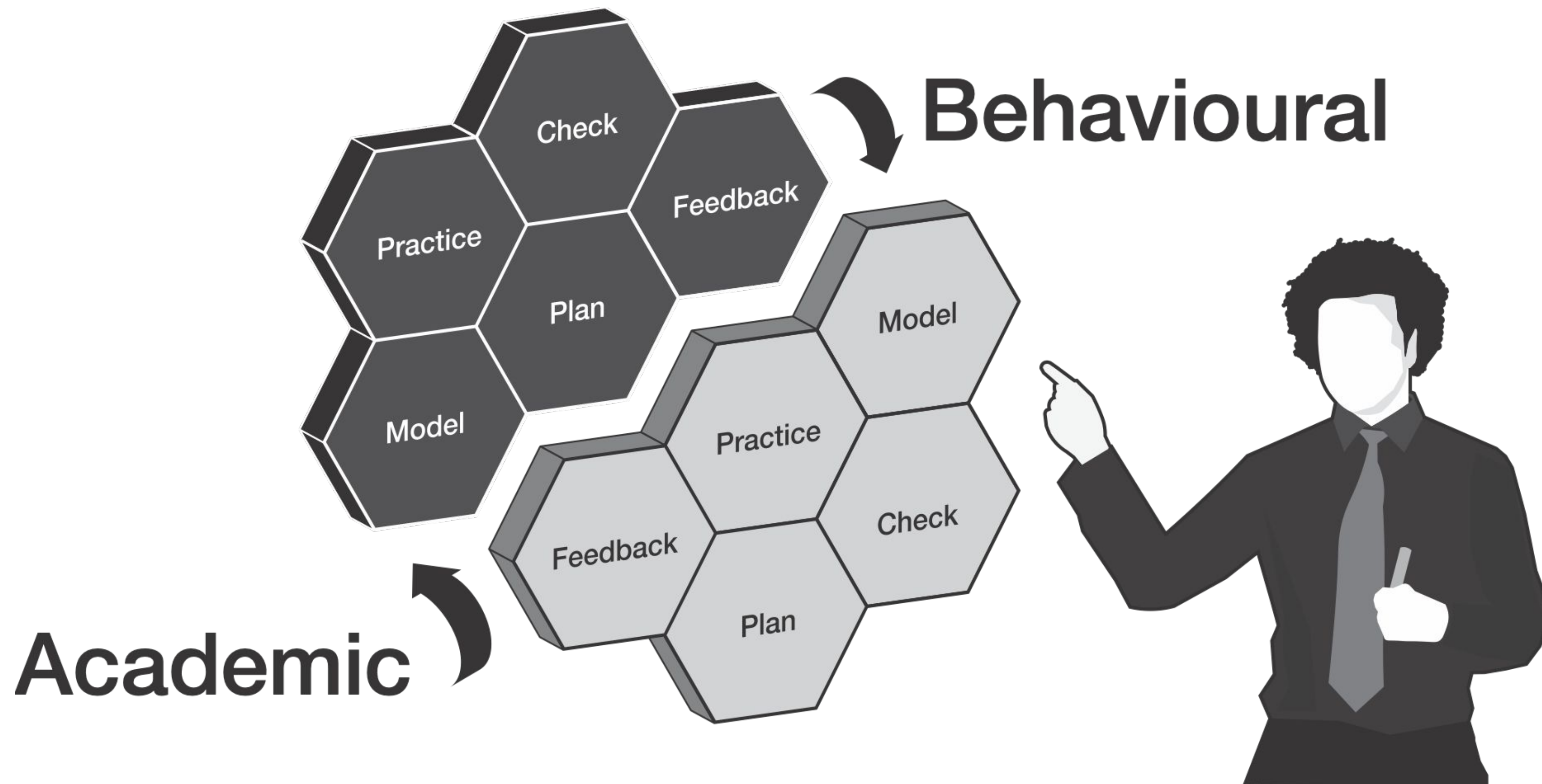
Practical strategies

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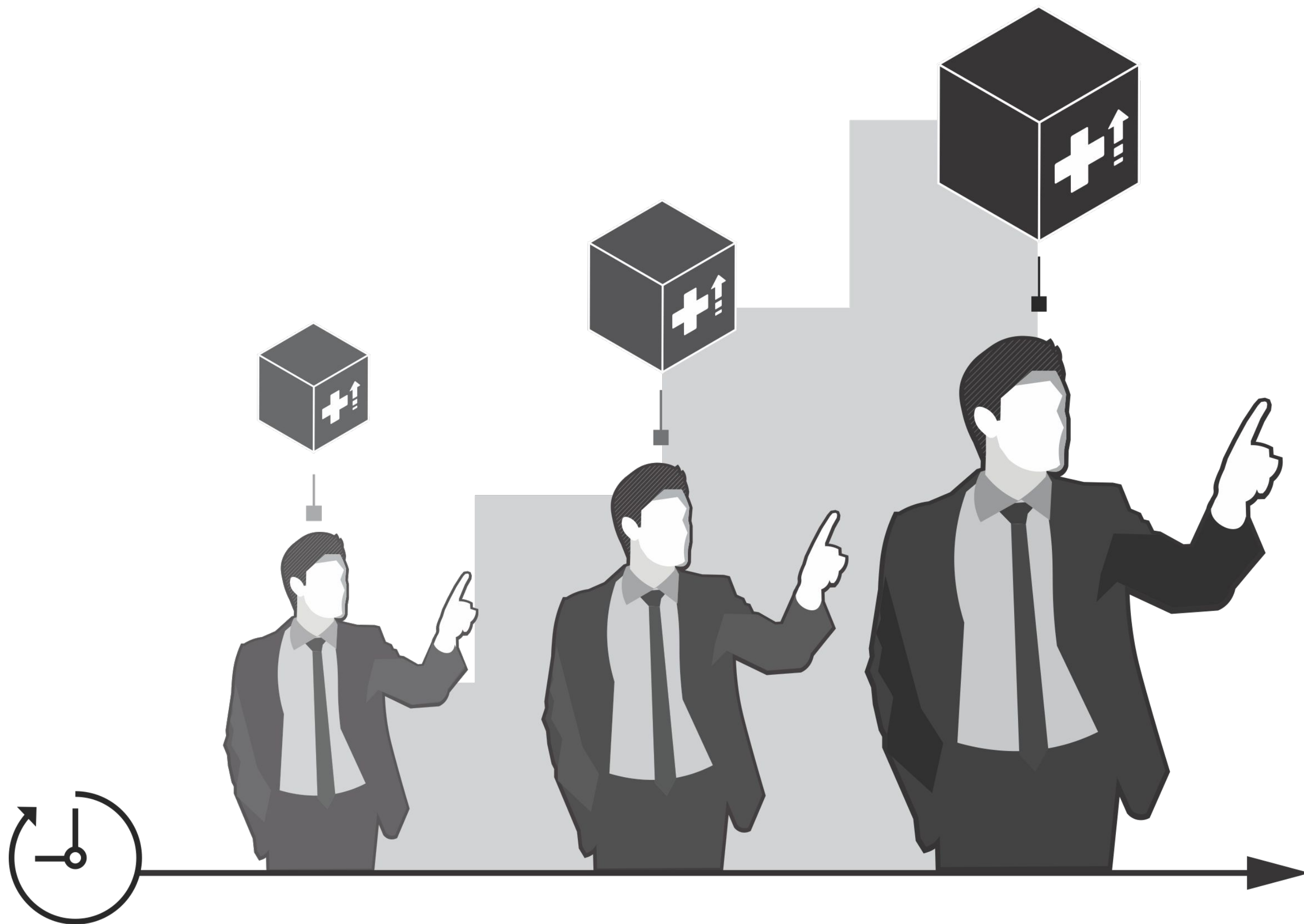
Principles

1. Behaviour can be viewed as a curriculum
2. Success is a powerful motivator
3. Students need to know they belong and that you believe in them

1. Behaviour can be viewed as a curriculum



2. Success is a powerful motivator





feelings



outcomes

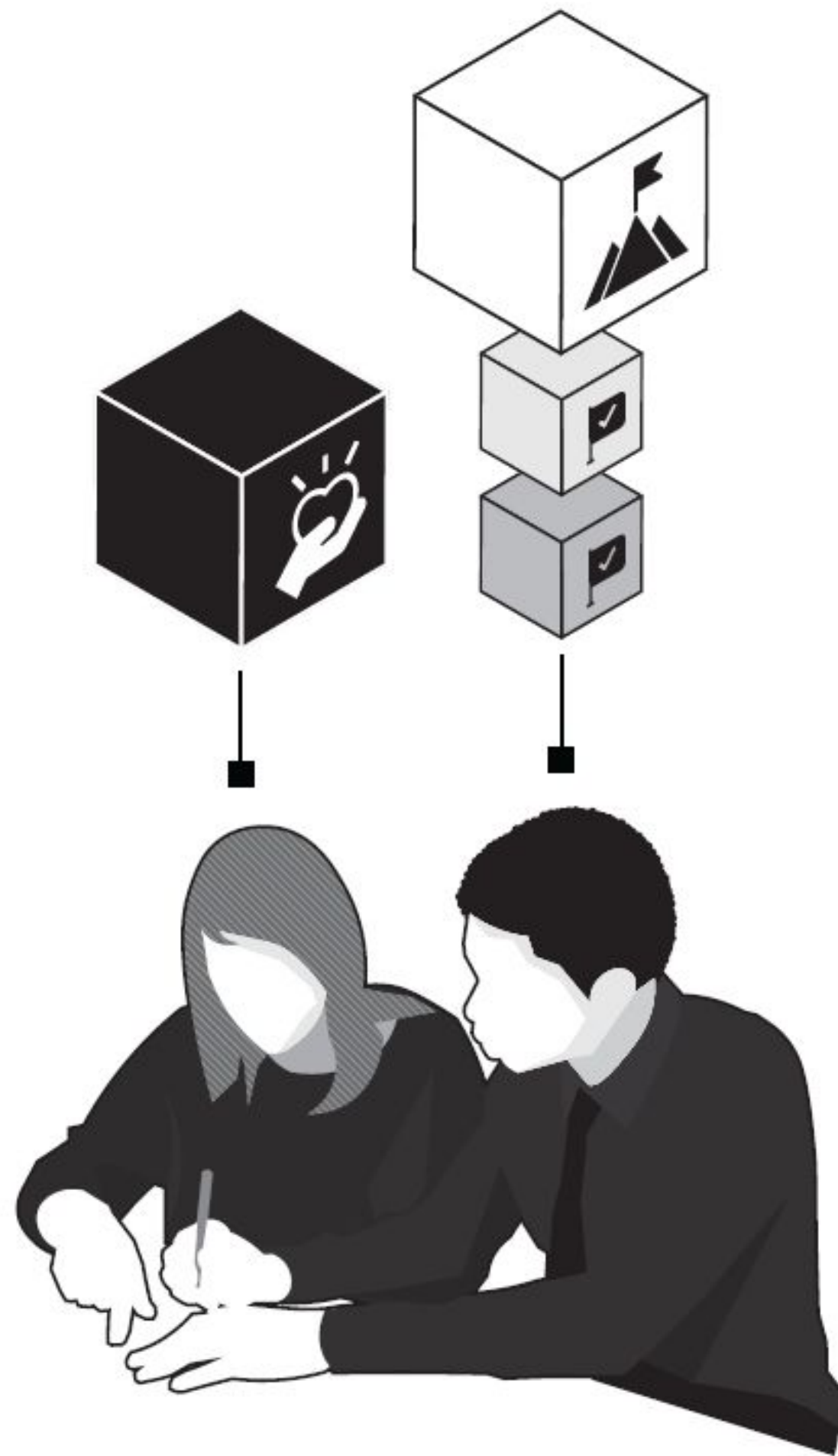


feelings



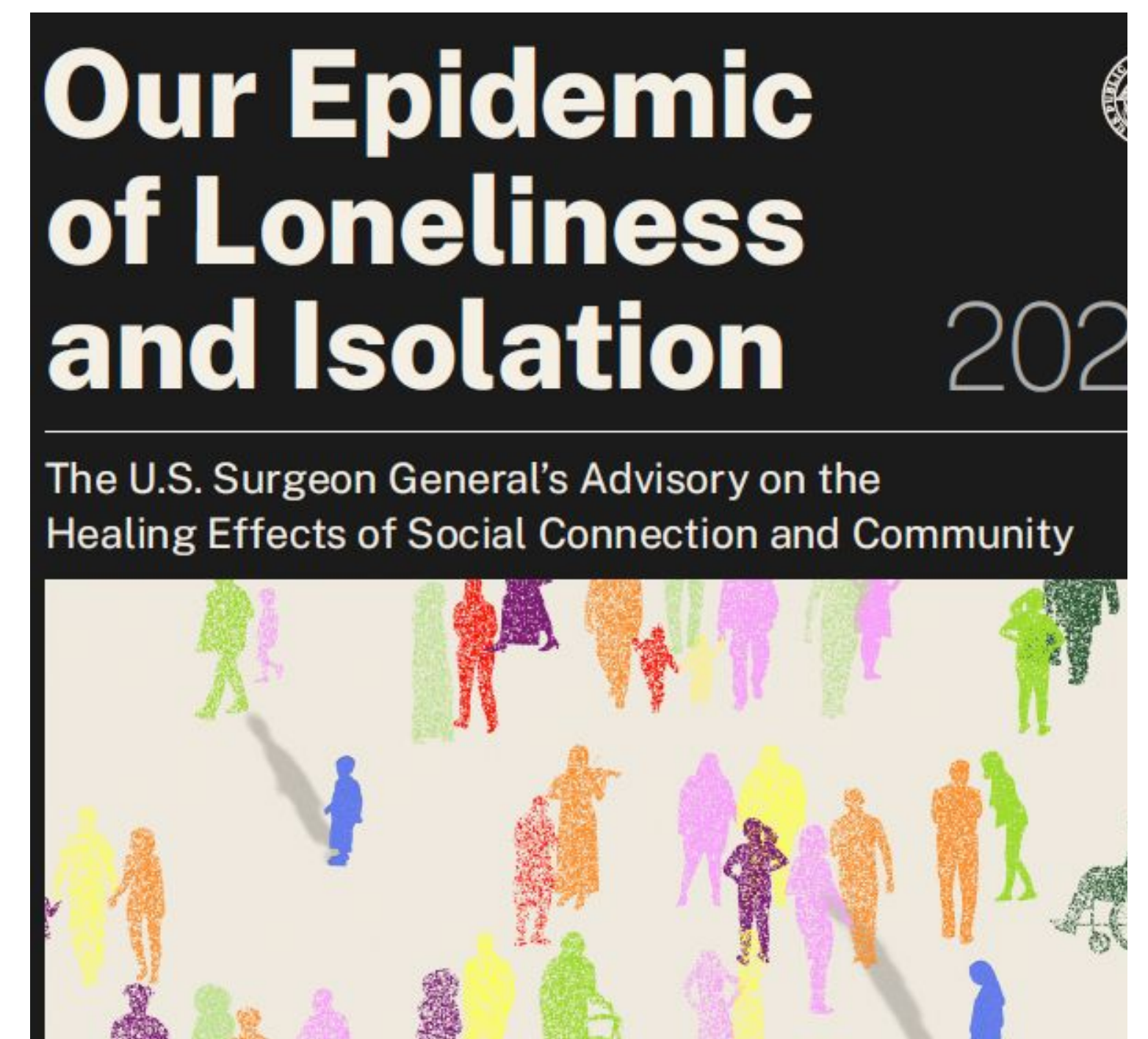
outcomes

3. Students need to know they belong and that you believe in them



Belonging matters

- Social connection is a fundamental human need, as essential to survival as food, water and shelter. (Murthy, 2022)
- The percentage of adults who have no close friends has increased from 36% to 54% in the last 20 years. (Way et al., 2018)
- The mortality impact of being socially disconnected is similar to that caused by smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day and even greater than that associated with obesity and physical inactivity (Way et al., 2018)
- Chronic loneliness and social isolation increase the risk of developing dementia by approximately 50%
- People are 4x more likely to report being lonely now, than in 1957.



Discuss

Which of these principles did you find most valuable and why?



Principles

- Behaviour can be viewed as a curriculum
- Success is a powerful motivator
- Students need to know they belong and that you believe in them



Today



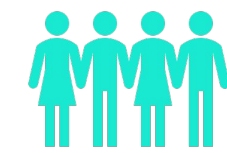
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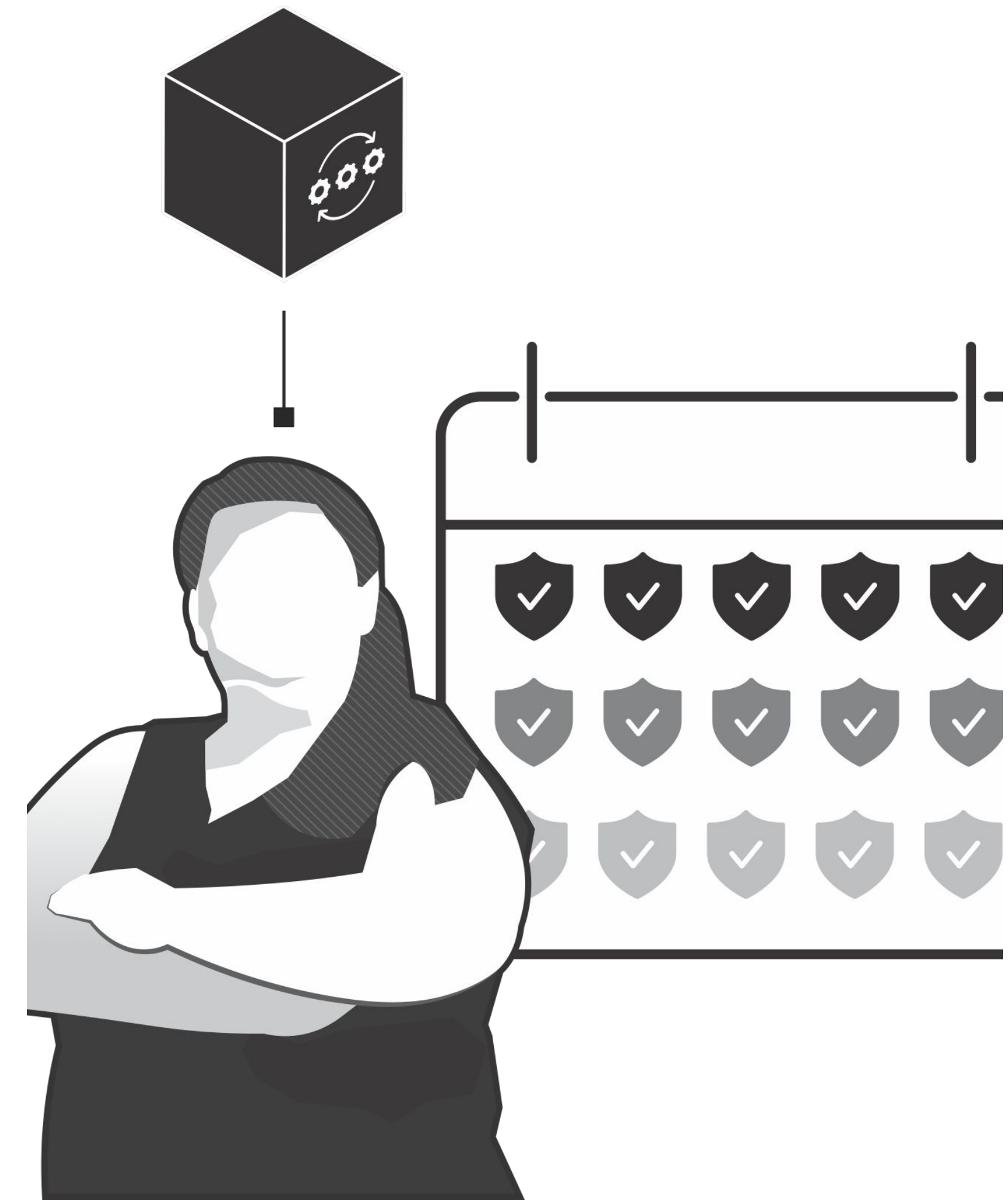
Practical strategies

- Tools
- Routines

First Day of
School

Tools ➡ Routines ➡ Scripts

- A tool is a specific technique that a teacher uses to manage the behaviour of students
- E.g., Proximity, Describe and Direct, Directed Choice, Take up Time
- A sequence of tools forms a routine. Our goal is to turn routines into habits over time.
- E.g. Defuse Debate

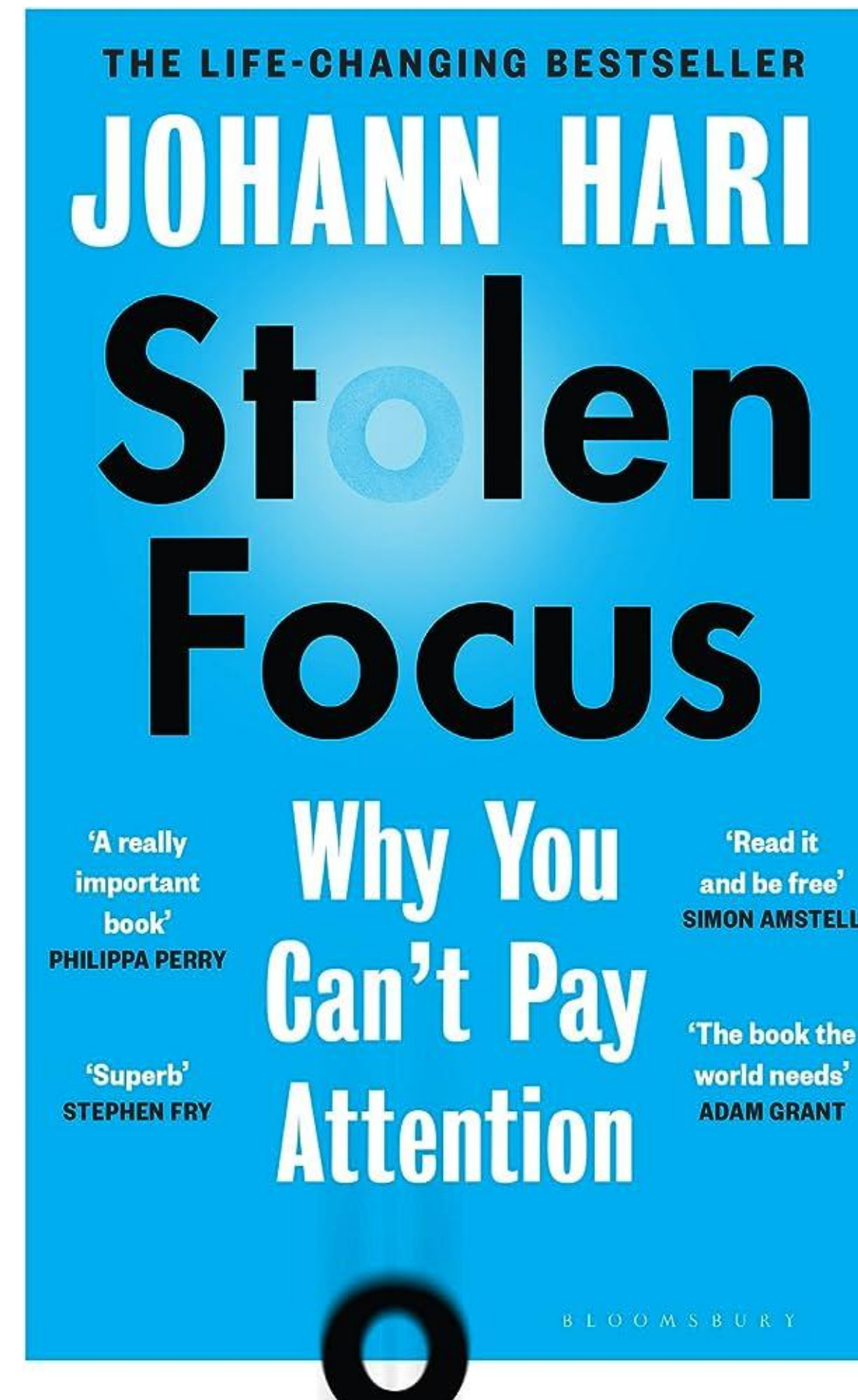


Routines

1. Gaining Attention
2. Defuse Debate

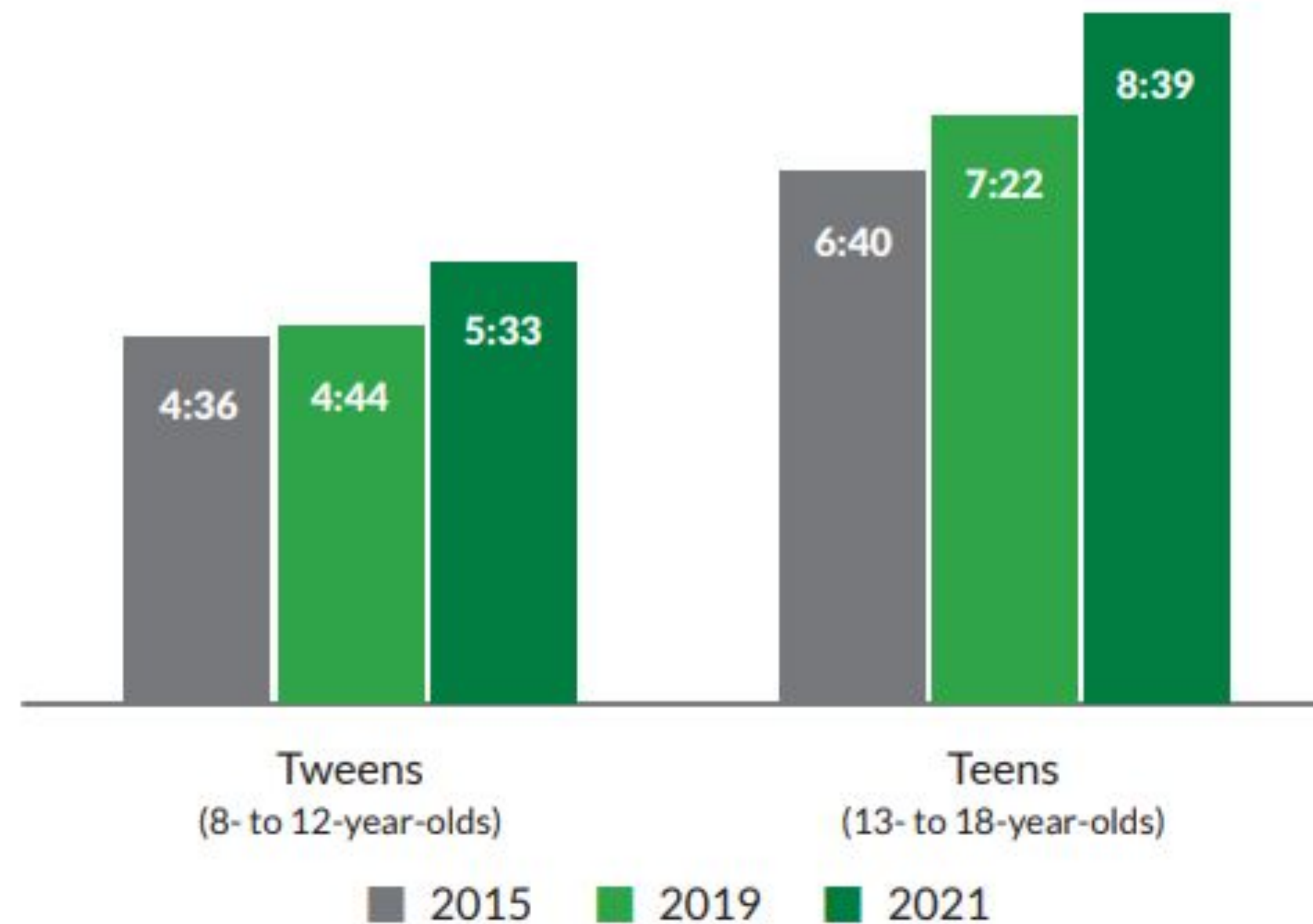
Attention

- Sleep
- Tech



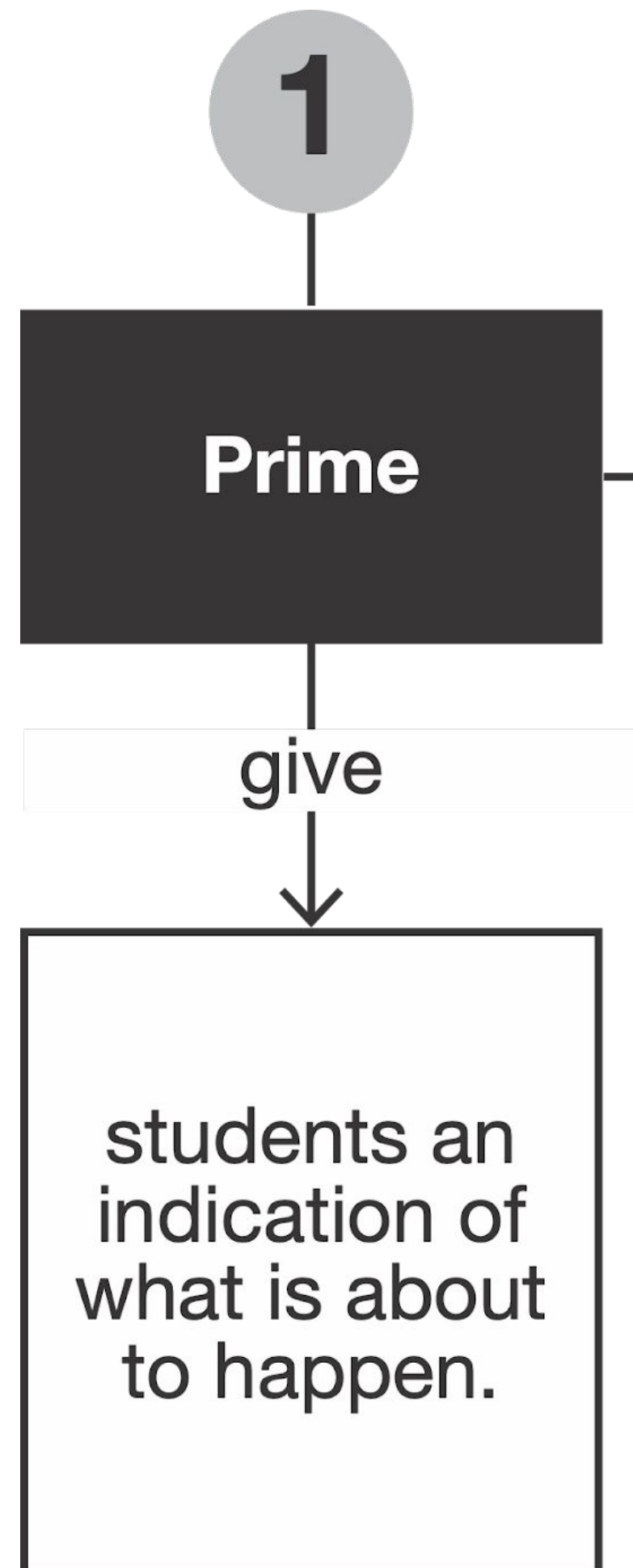
Tech

FIGURE A. Total entertainment screen use among tweens and teens, per day, 2015 to 2021



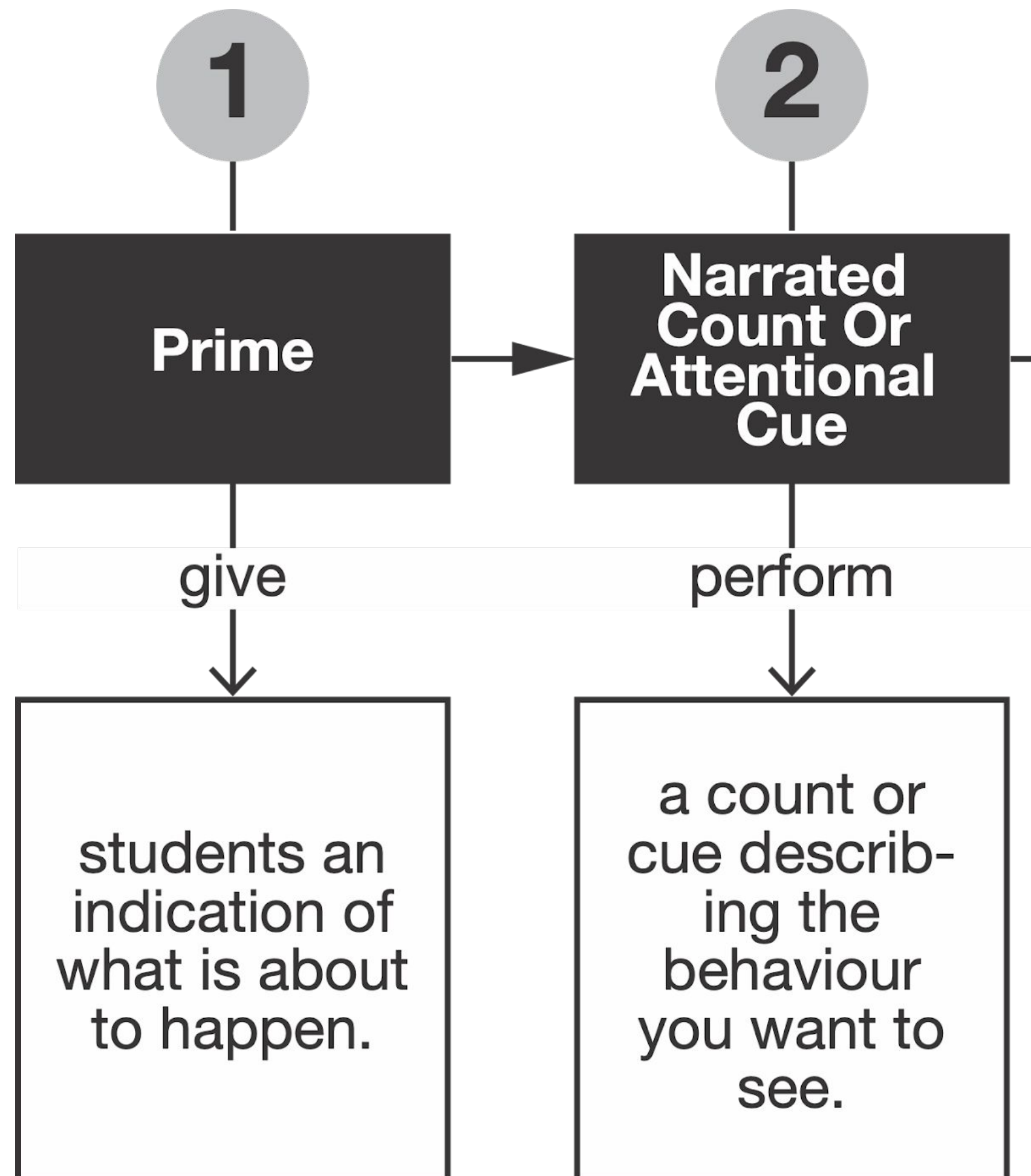
Routine

Gaining Attention



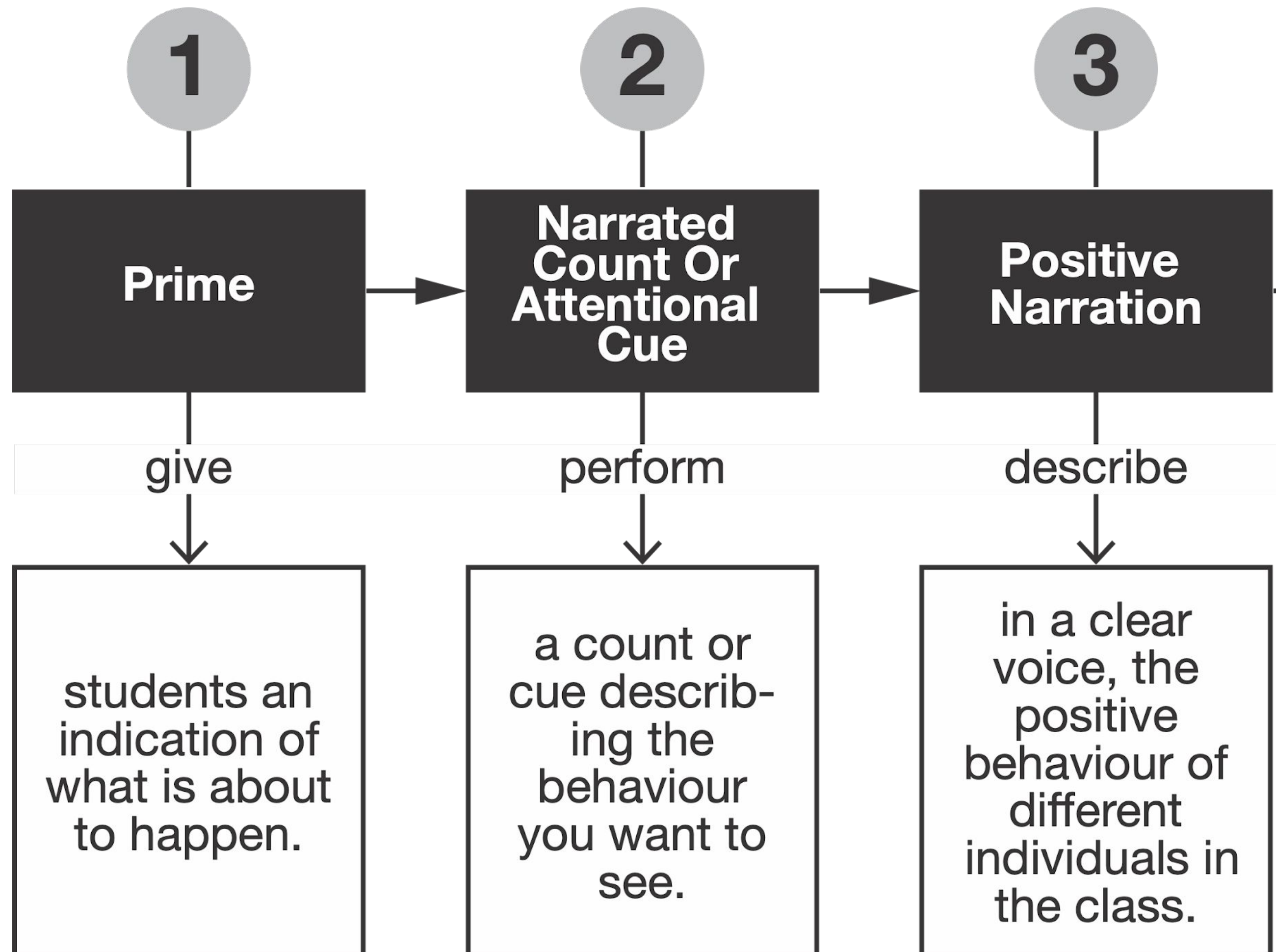
Routine

Gaining Attention



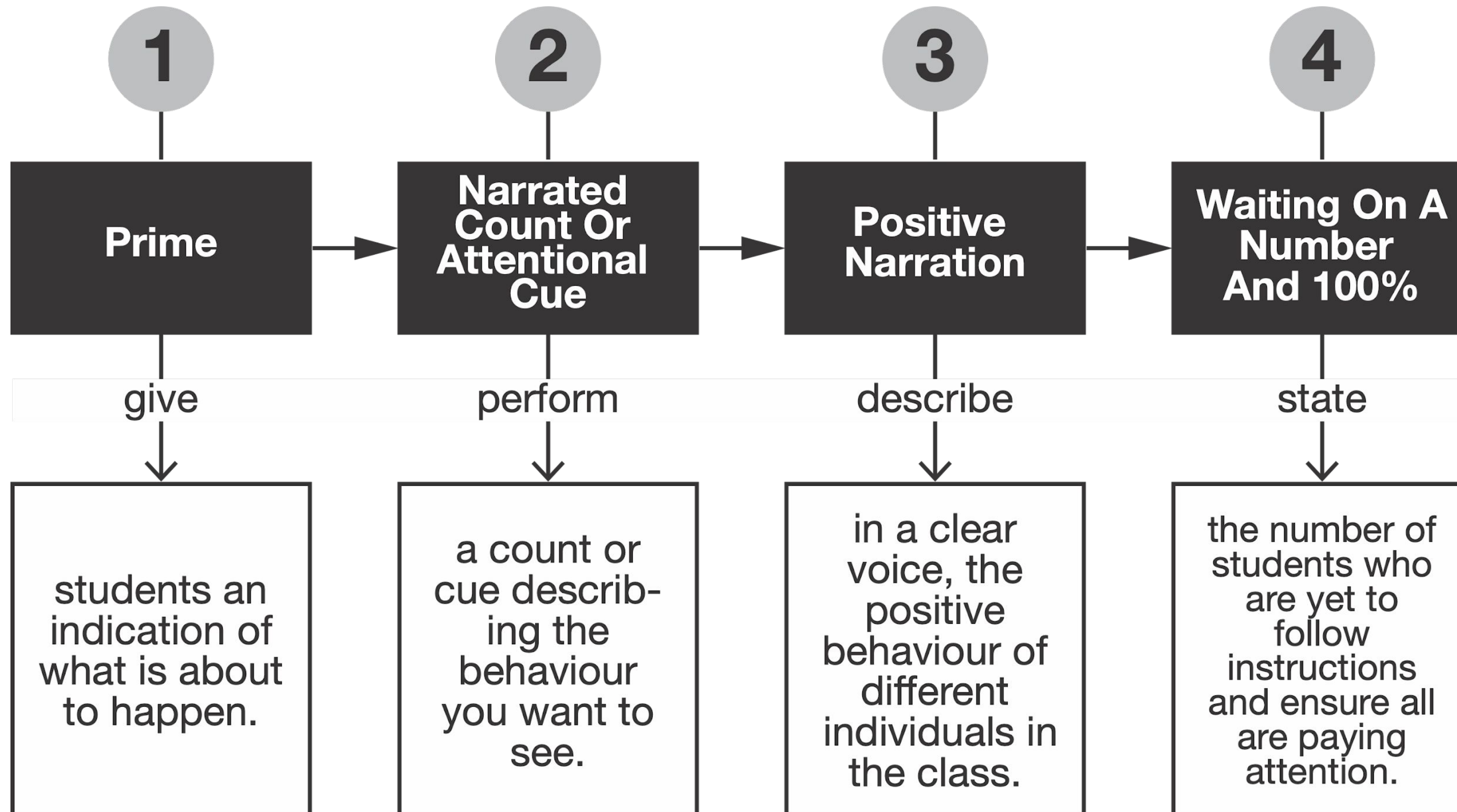
Routine

Gaining Attention



Routine

Gaining Attention



Discuss

How might you 'gain attention' in your class?



What about When

WAW

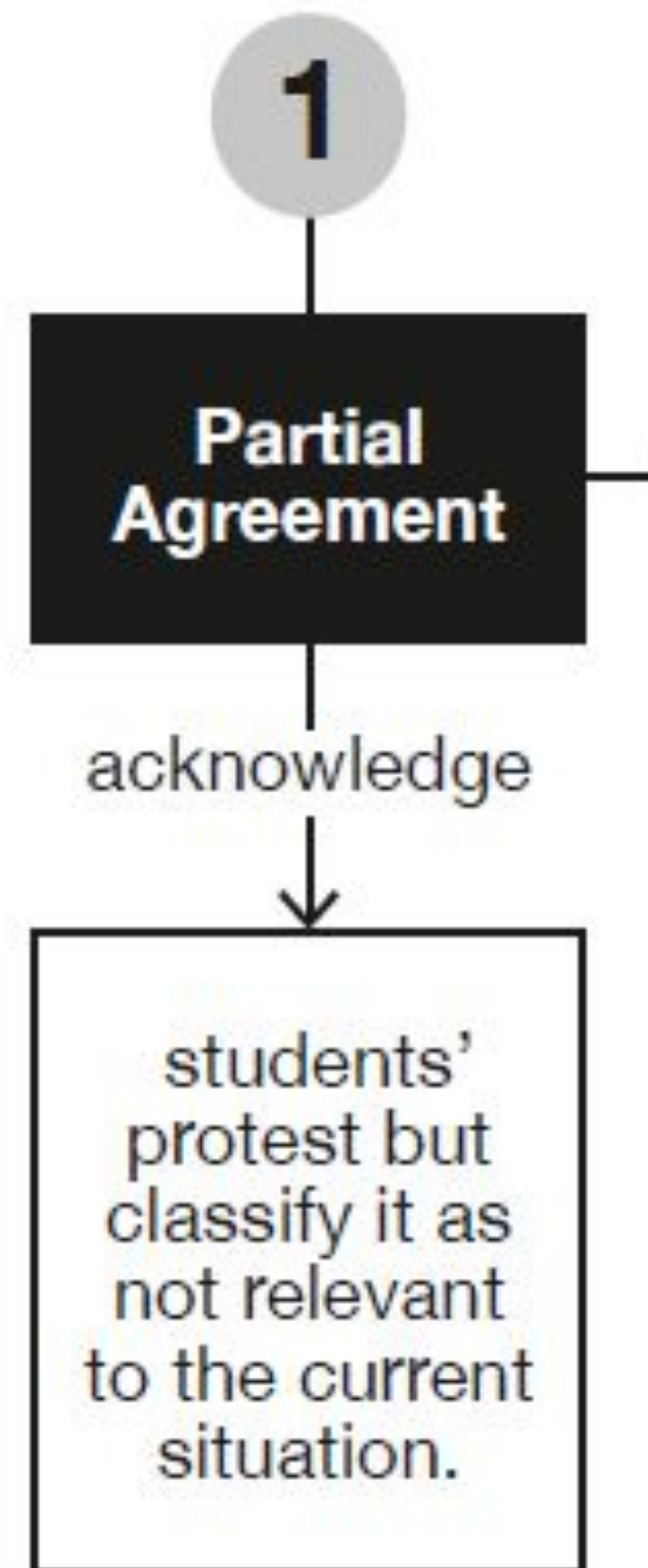
1. Students ask to be excused
2. Attention drifts during instruction

Routines

1. Gaining Attention
2. Defuse Debate

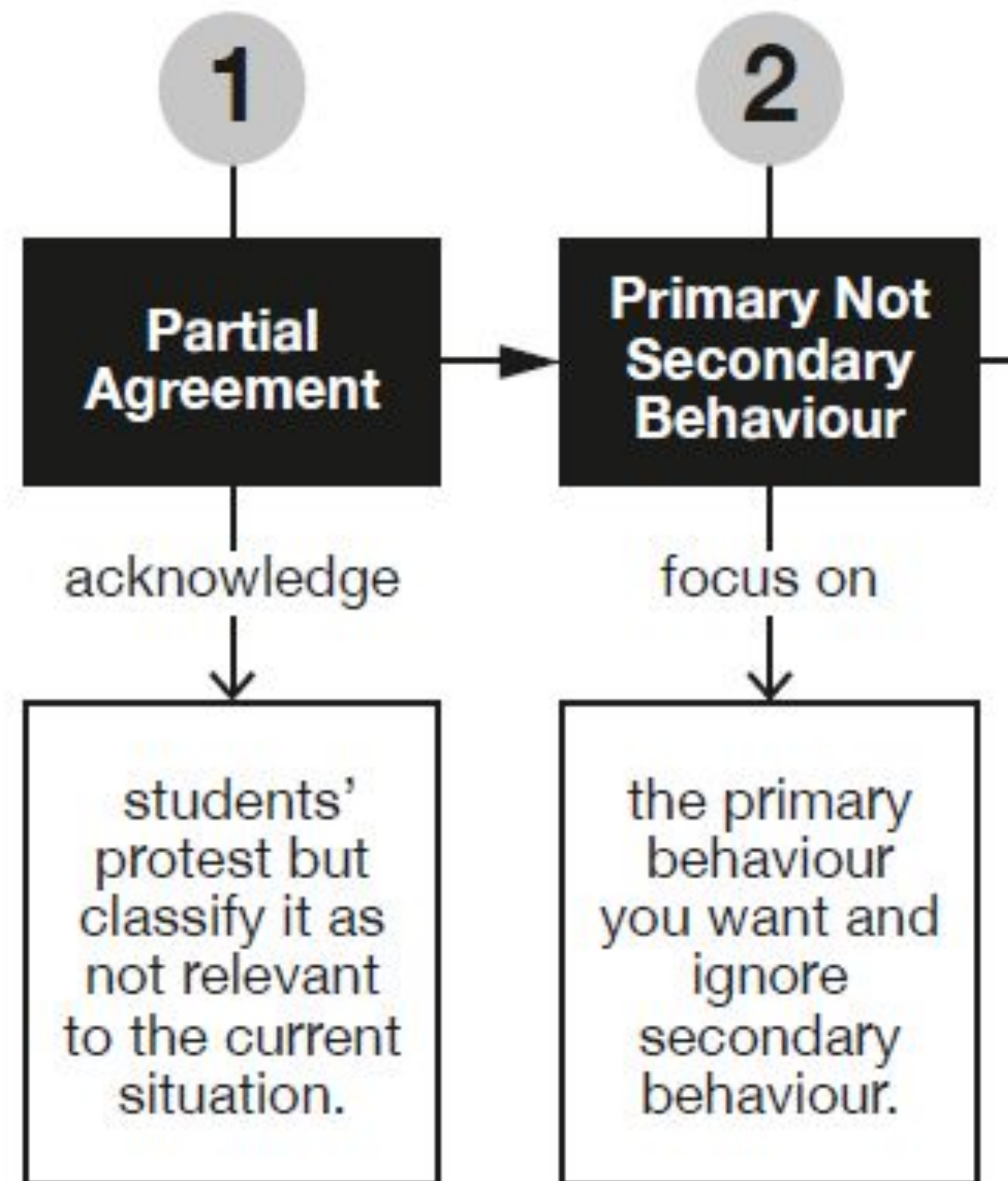
Routine

Defuse Debate



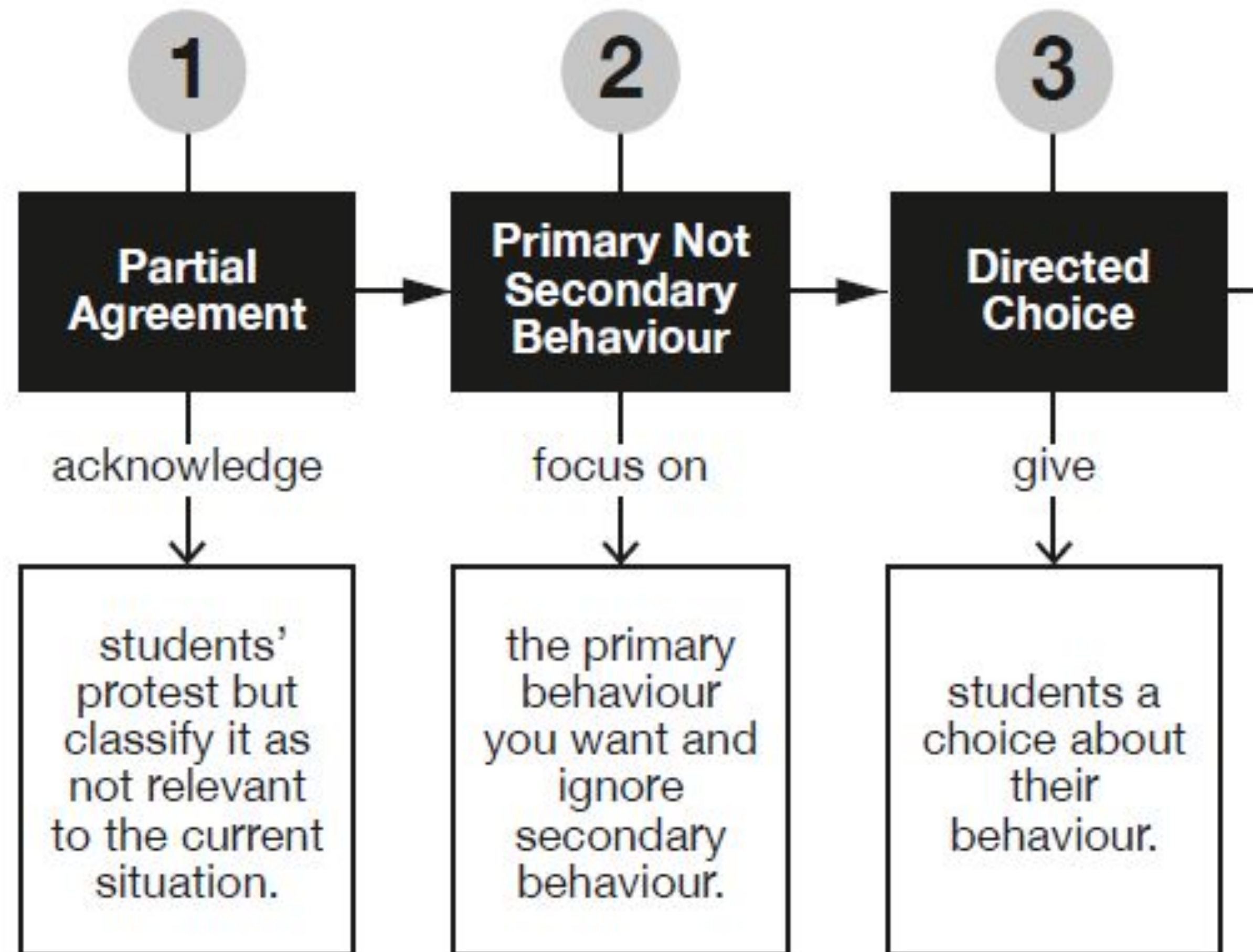
Routine

Defuse Debate



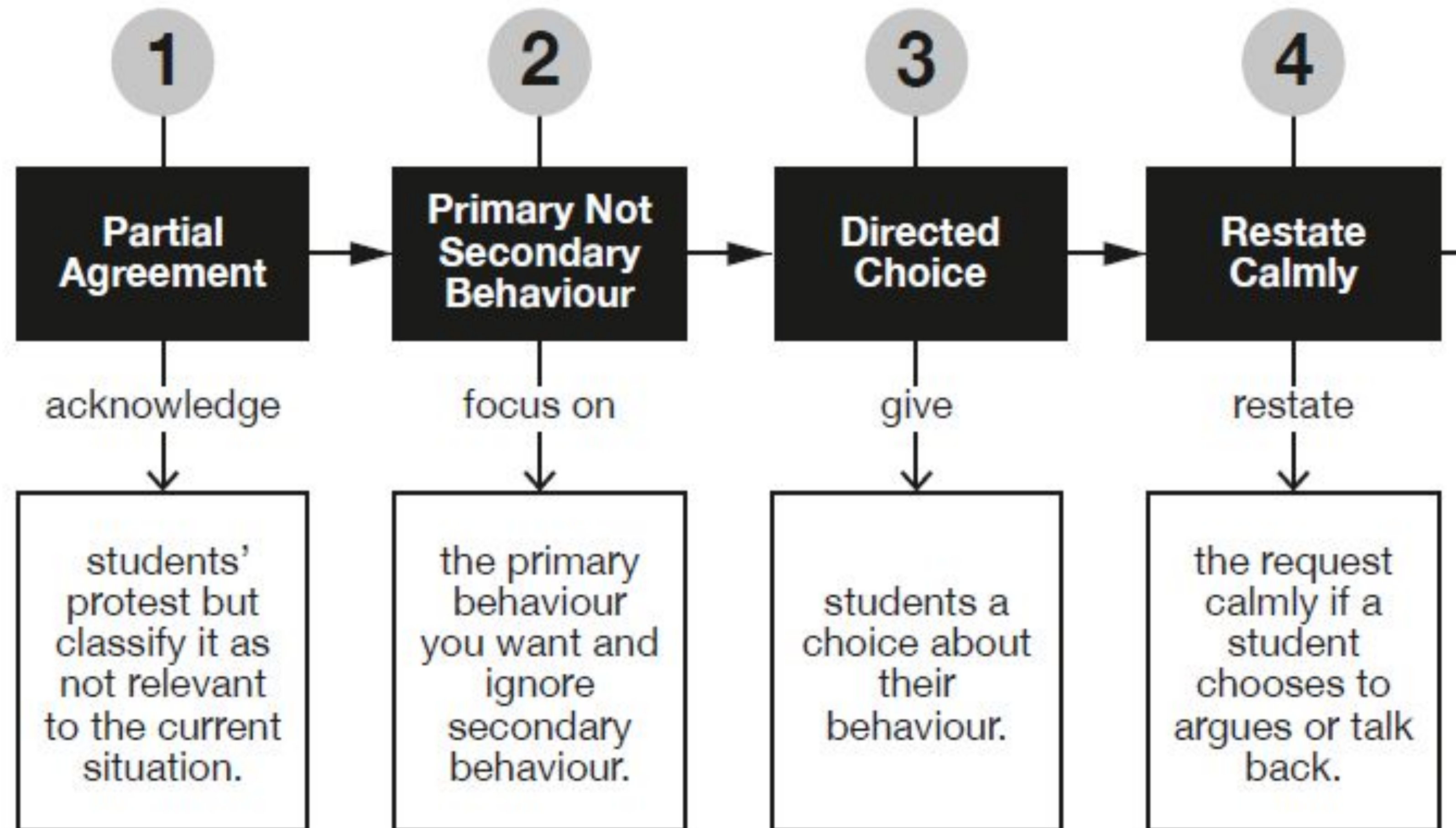
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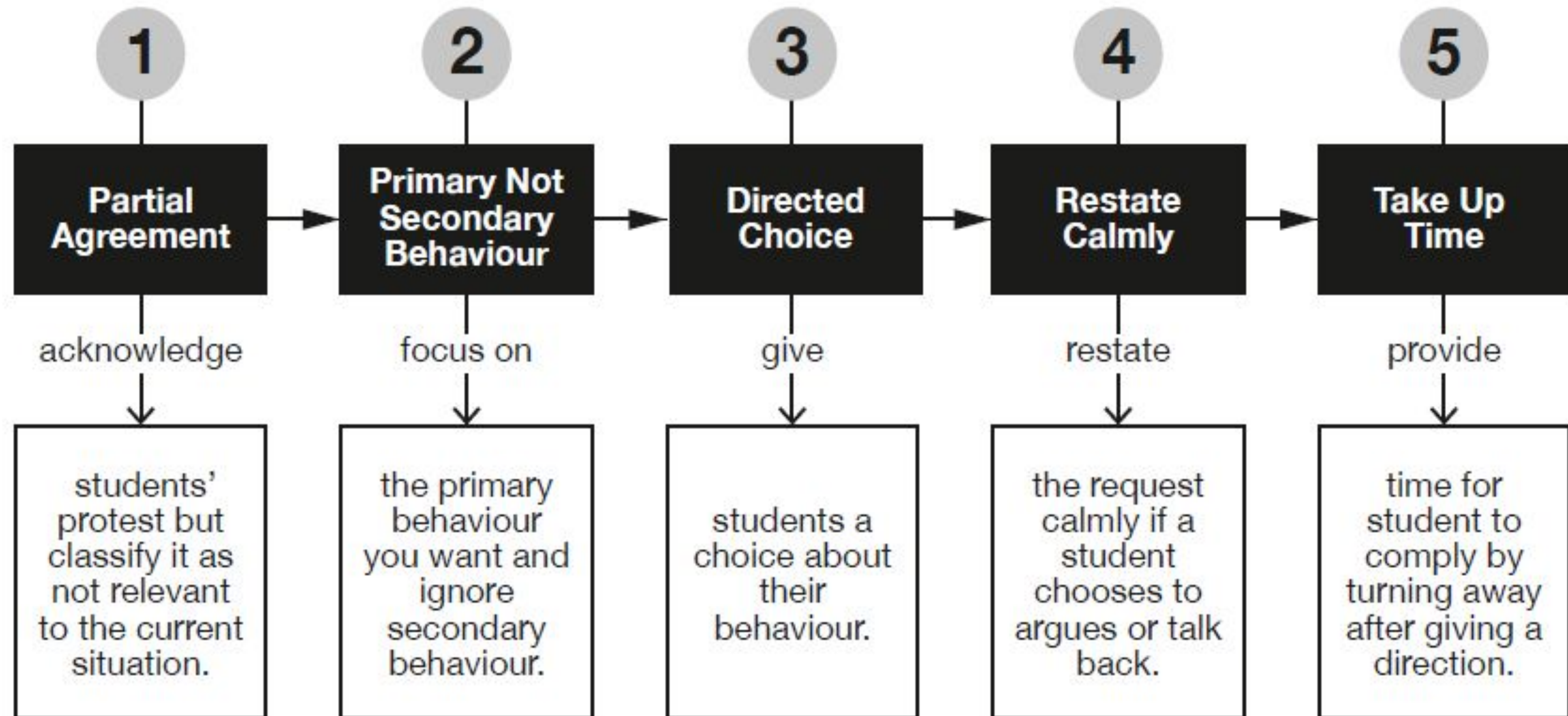
Routine

Defuse Debate



Routine

Defuse Debate



What about When

WAW

1. This is boring
2. Flat out refused to comply

Today



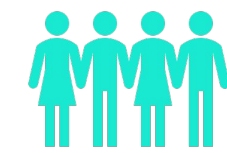
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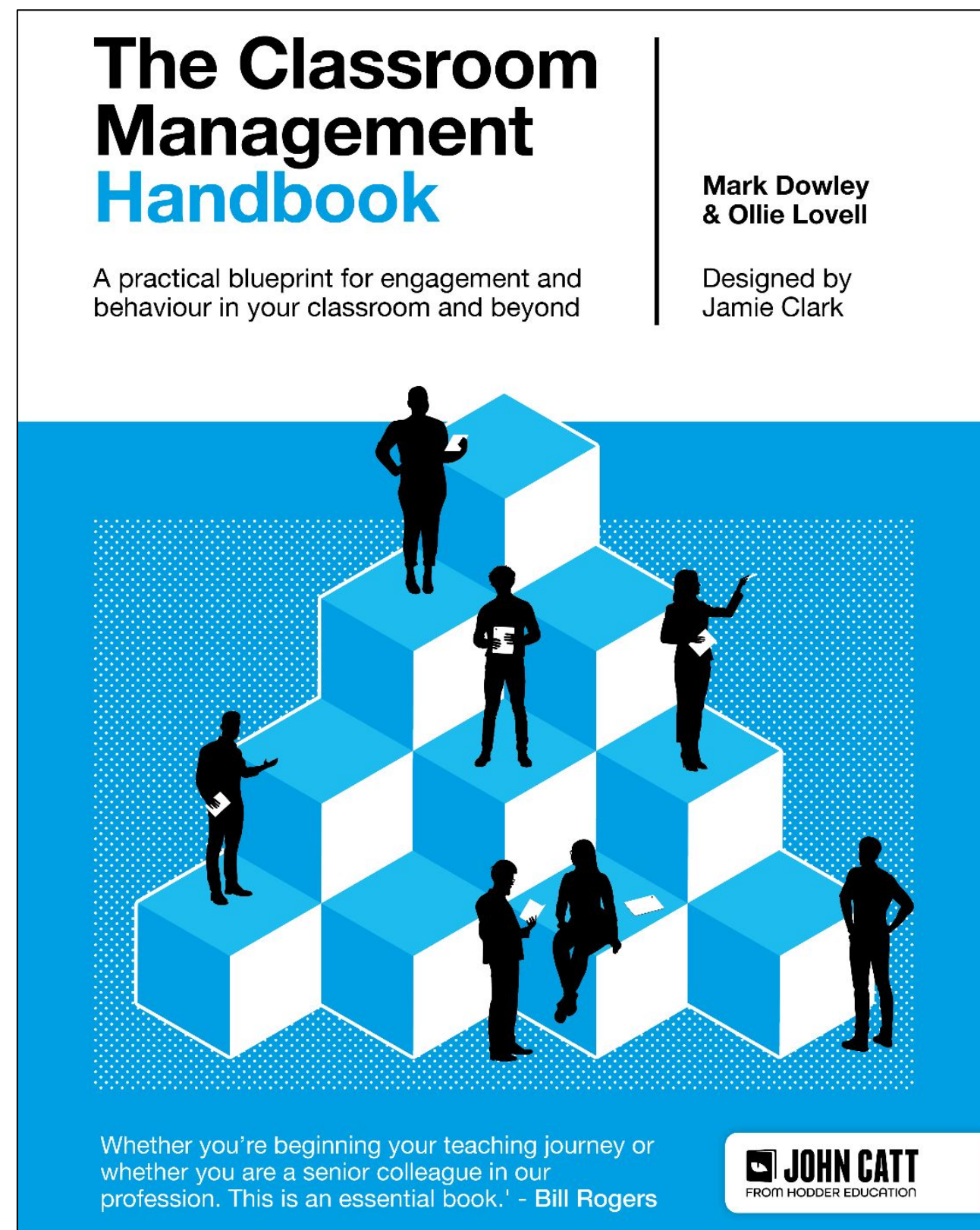
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**I want to acknowledge how hard it is to
be a teacher these days, or a parent,
coach, or anyone else who works with
children and adolescents**

**Teaching is deeply human work.
Thank you. You make a difference.**

Want the slides and sample chapter



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