TRUST TRICKS

4 Quick Wins for Your Classroom

We're living through a trust recession; that is, a moment when uncertainty, misinformation, and technology have made us question what's real. Here are four ways to build trust in your classroom

Strategies that Connect

Trust grows in the most human moments when students feel seen and heard. Use arts-based routines to make connection intentional.

Try the See-Think-Wonder routine. Begin by showing an image, artwork, or clip. **Ask** students: What do you *see*? What do you *think*? What do you *wonder*?

Try the Drawing by Description strategy where one student describes an image and the other draws it (no questions allowed!). Then as a class, discuss what it takes to depend on someone else's clarity.

Reflect:
Where can I create five more minutes of connection (*not* instruction) each day?

Spaces that Matter

A safe space isn't always a trusted space. Students trust spaces that feel relevant, where *who they are* shows up.

Try this: Ask students to bring in or share one object, sound, or image that represents their interests, and build a class collage of their collective identity.

Ask:
- Does my classroom invite curiosity or compliance?
- Do students see themselves reflected in examples, decor, and/or tone?

Reflect:
How can I make this classroom a place they *want* to be, not just *have* to be?

Trust in Ourselves

External trust starts with *internal confidence*. When we invest in our own growth, we remember what learning (and vulnerability) feels like.

Try doing one thing this month that stretches *you*. Some ideas include (but are not limited to): taking a creative class, starting a new hobby, or even choosing PD that excites you.

Make a note of what changes when you do.

Reflect:
Where am I hardest on myself, and what proof do I already have that I can trust me?

Practicing Discernment

Discernment is the new literacy. In a world of deepfakes and half-truths, learning how to pause and question is a radical act of trust-building.

Try this: Bring an image, article, or AI-generated clip to class.

Ask:
- What makes this seem real?
- What might make it unreliable?
- What would we need to know to decide?

Let *curiosity*, not certainty, guide the discussion.

Reflect:
Am I modeling discernment as a *shared search for truth*, or as a test of who's right?