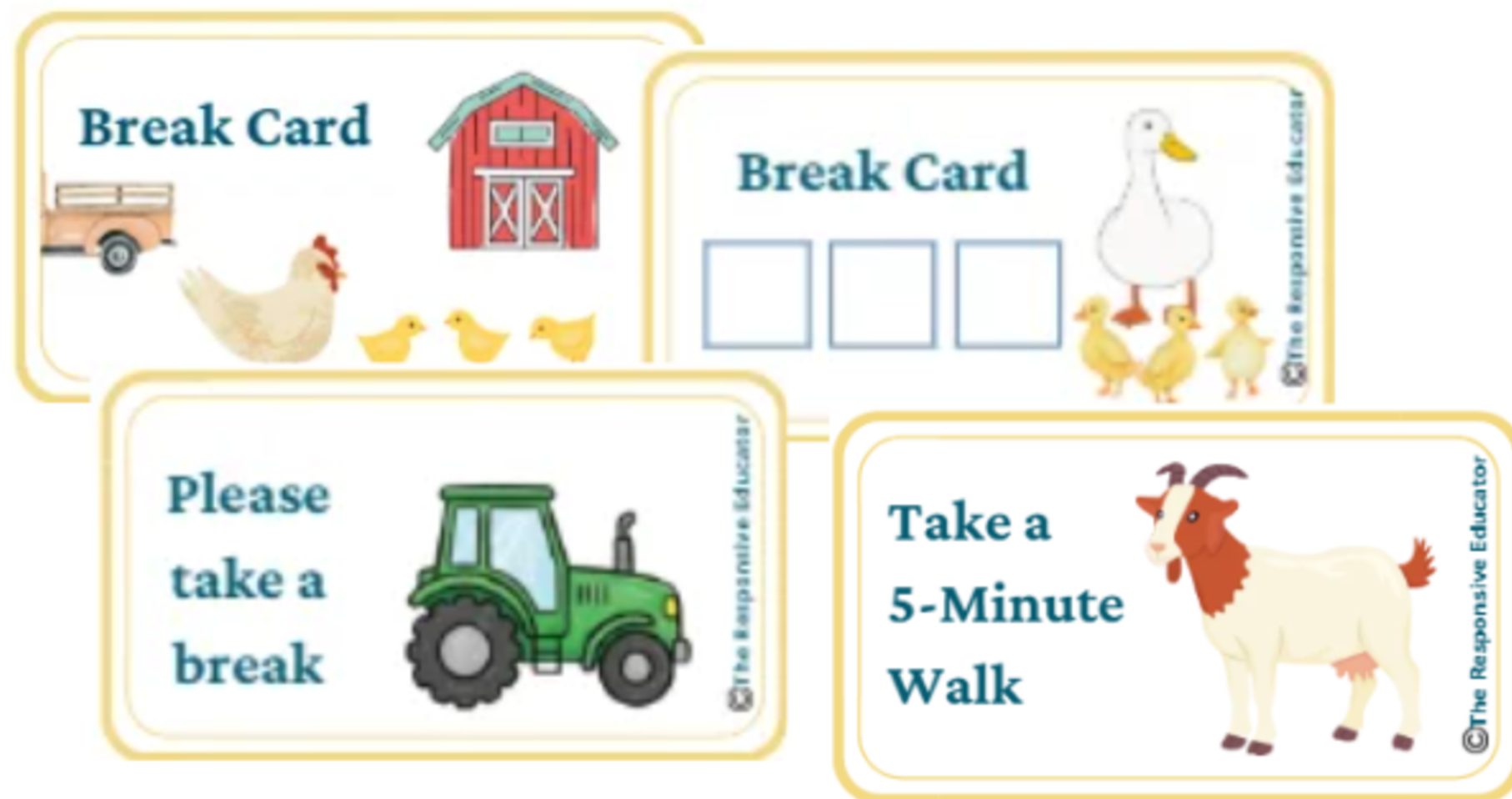


Student Break Cards

Farm



4 Break Supports + Progress Charts



Clear Visuals for Predictable
Break Routines

TEACH STUDENTS TO
ASK FOR A BREAK
AND RETURN TO
LEARNING

SCROLL
to take a look inside!

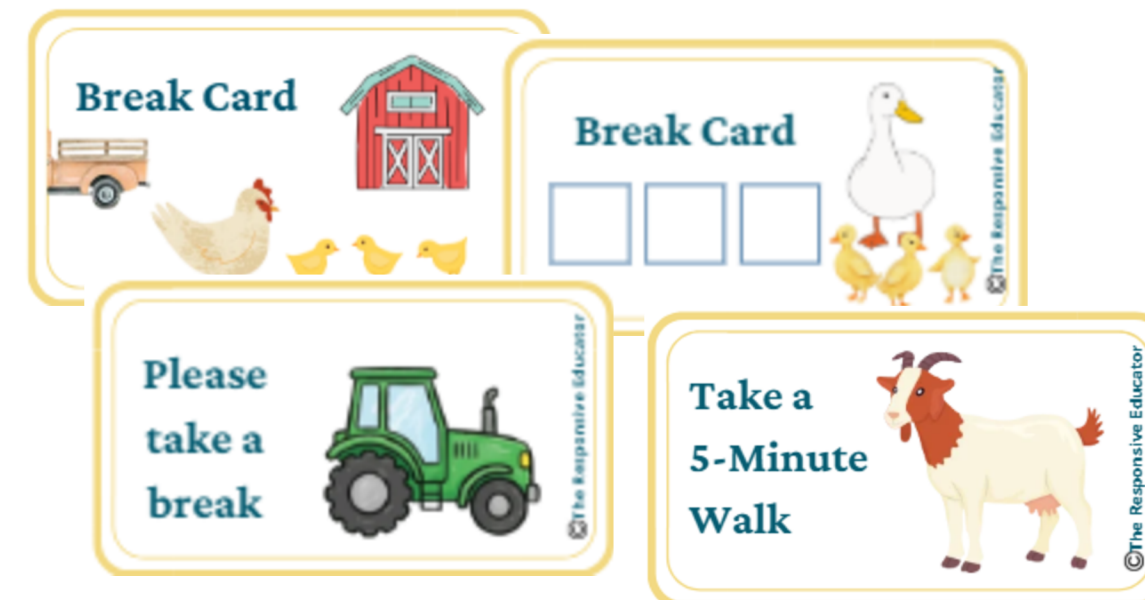
STUDENT BREAK CARDS

More Than Just a Card to Hand Out

When a student becomes overwhelmed, knowing how to ask for a break can be a skill we need to teach.

Teach and practice the routine—not just how to use the card.

✓ 4 Break Card Formats + Optional Progress Charts



The progress chart is a vertical rectangular card with a yellow border and a small red barn icon in the top right corner. It includes a 'Name:' label with a blue line for writing. Below the name field is a grid of 20 yellow stars arranged in 4 rows and 5 columns. The first three rows are completely filled with stars, while the fourth row has only the first three stars filled. At the bottom of the card, it says '©The Responsive Educator'.

Needing a Break Is Not a Failure

Adults ask for a moment or step away when they need space.

Some students need us to teach them how.

✓ **Asking for support is a skill worth teaching.**



BEFORE FRUSTRATION ESCALATES

Teach students to

- 1 Recognize when they need a break.
- 2 Show or give the card to an adult.
- 3 Follow the break routine and rejoin.



✓ **Practice when calm—not only when overwhelmed.**

SOMETIMES ADULTS NOTICE FIRST

Offer a visual cue when a student does not yet recognize or communicate that they need a break.

✓ **Offer support—
not punishment.**

Offer a
Break

Please
take a
break



Offer a
Movement Break

Take a
5-Minute
Walk



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MAKE THE BREAK ROUTINE PREDICTABLE

Teach the student what to expect before, during, and after a break.

How: Request or accept a break.

Where: Go to the agreed place.

What: Use the agreed break options.

When: Recognize when the break is ending.

Return: Rejoin with support as needed.

✓ **Model and practice—not just explain.**



WON'T STUDENTS USE BREAKS TO AVOID WORK?

- ★ **Teach that asking works** - When teaching a break request to replace escalation, initially honor each request for the agreed break. Students need to trust that asking gets them support.
- ★ **Recognize progress** - Several appropriately requested breaks can mean less lost learning time than a meltdown and lengthy recovery.
- ★ **Build coping skills at the same time** - Teach ways to handle frustration and reinforce staying with manageable tasks. As readiness grows, breaks may become shorter or happen closer to the activity.

WHEN IS THE 3-BREAK CARD APPROPRIATE?

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Consider it when the student:

- Consistently requests breaks and follows the routine.
- Is developing ways to manage frustration and return to tasks.
- Has a support plan and observation data that support a planned limit.



Set a time frame that fits the student

- Three breaks per hour, half day, or full day—based on individual need.
Teach when the boxes reset.

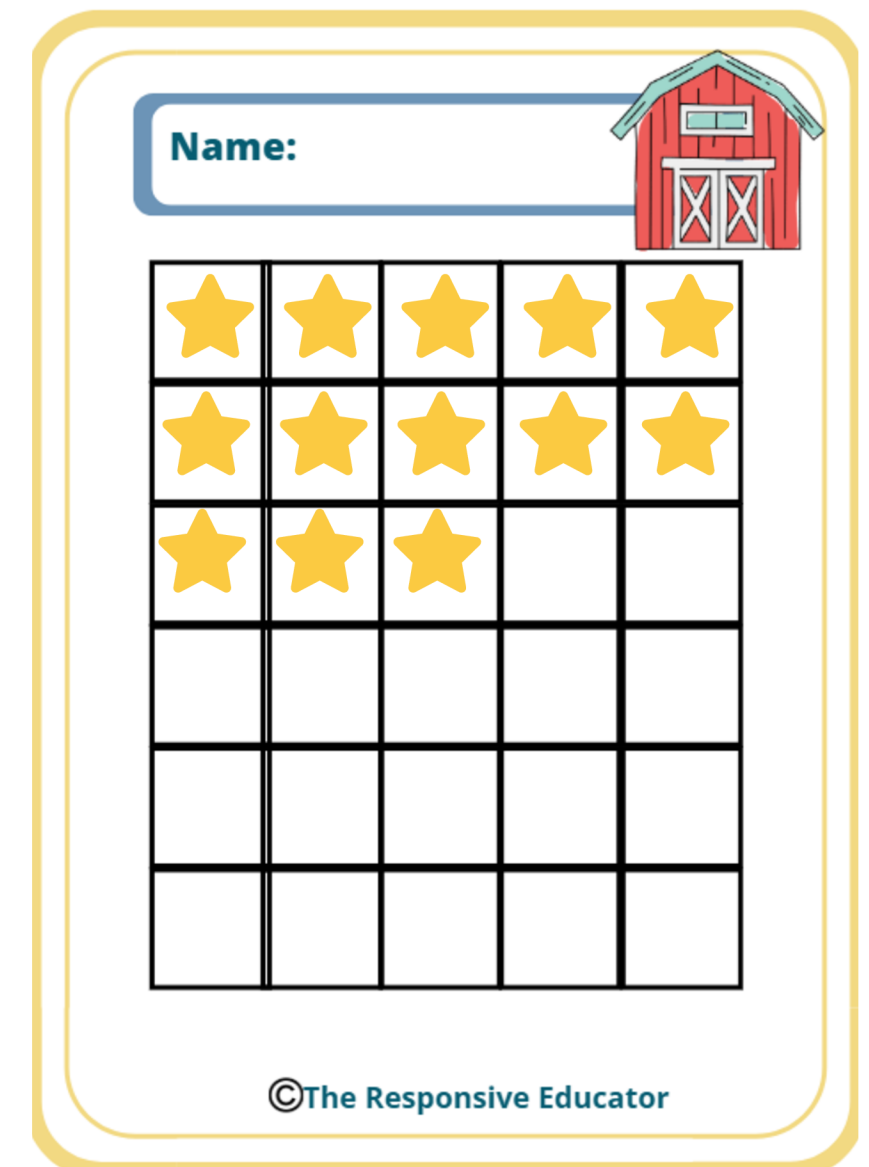
**Needed breaks remain available after all three boxes are marked.
The adult-offered card can help cue a break when a student is becoming overwhelmed.**

REINFORCE THE BREAK ROUTINE

Use the optional progress charts to recognize one skill at a time.

- 1 Choose a skill, such as:
 - Asking for a break.
 - Using a coping strategy.
 - Rejoining the activity with support.

- 2 Add a sticker or mark when the student demonstrates the chosen skill.



A progress chart template with a yellow border. At the top right is a red barn icon. Below it is a blue box with the text "Name:". Below the name box is a grid of 15 squares arranged in 3 rows and 5 columns. The first two rows are filled with yellow stars. The third row has three yellow stars in the first three columns, and the last two columns are empty. At the bottom of the chart is the text "©The Responsive Educator".

★	★	★	★	★
★	★	★	★	★
★	★	★		

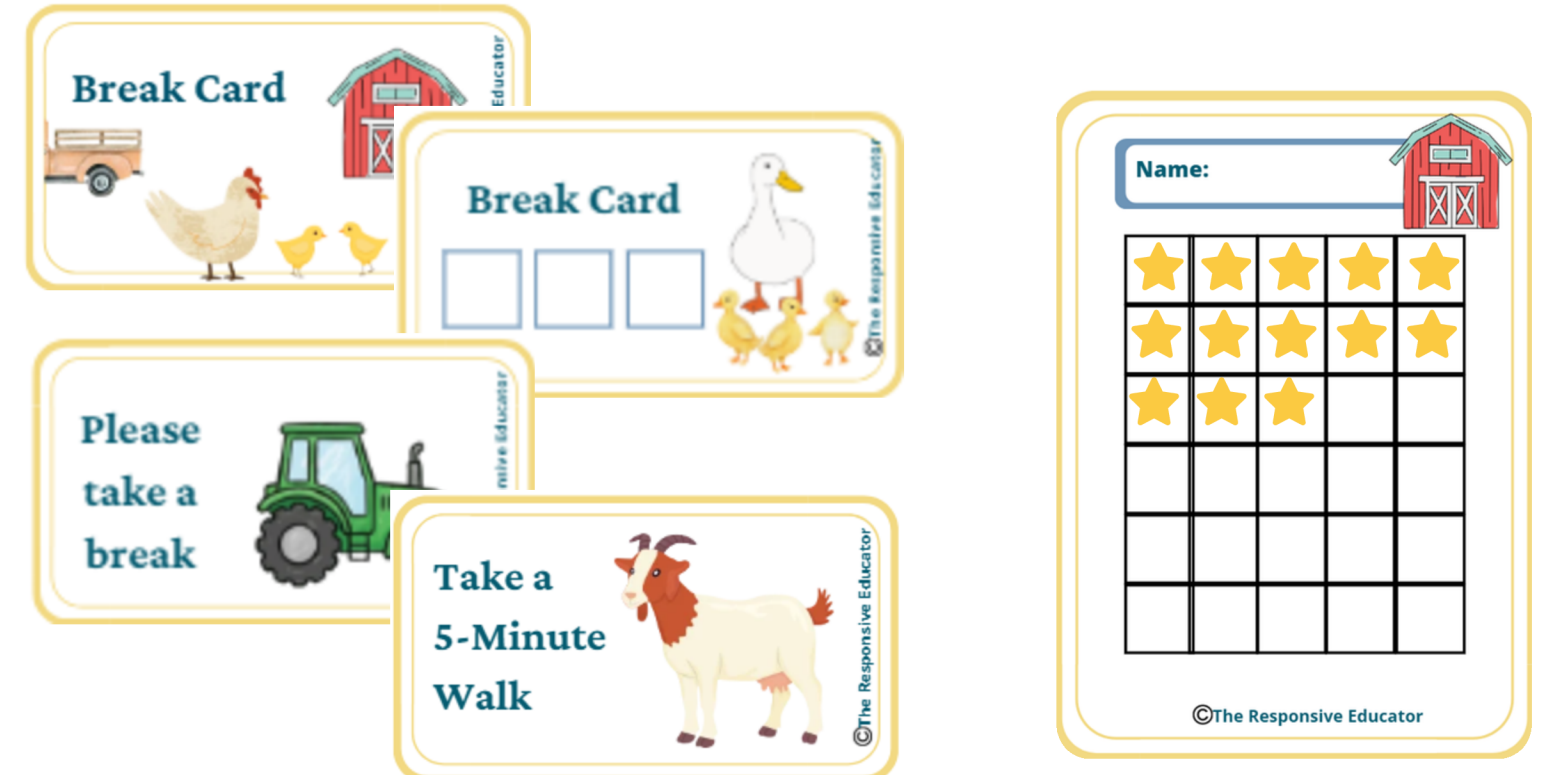
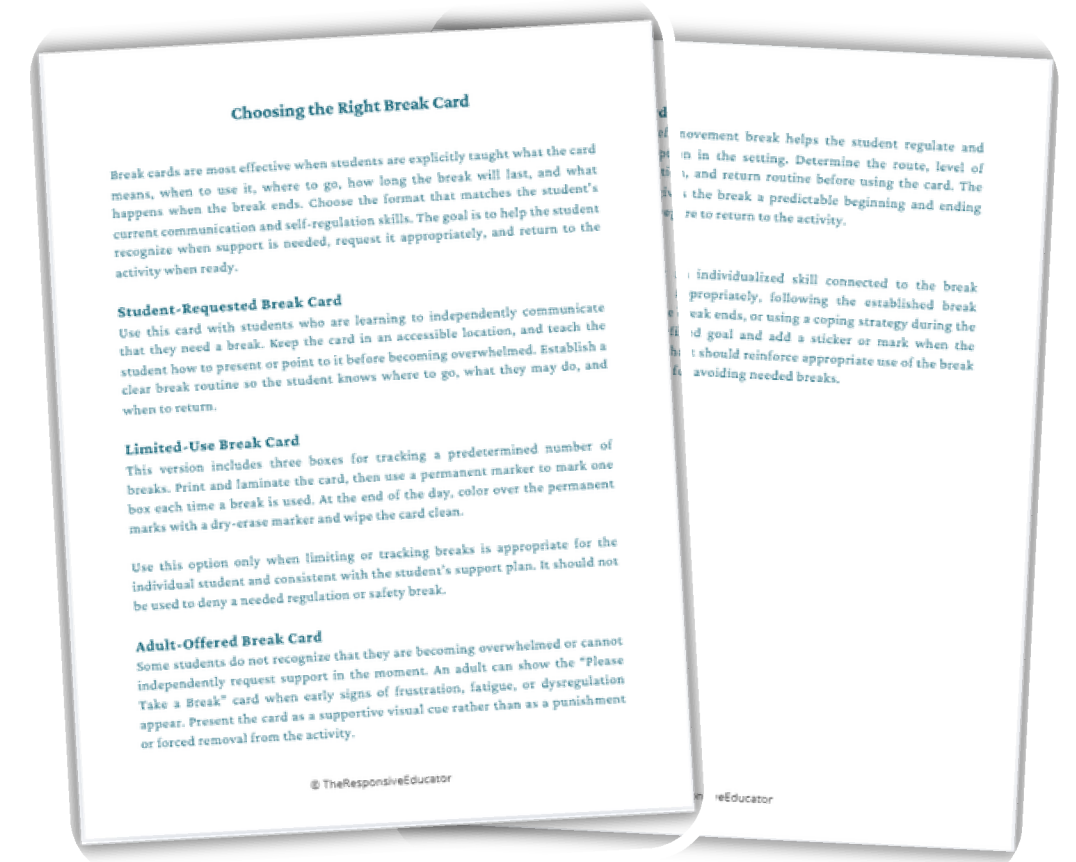
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Recognize successful use of the routine—not going without needed breaks.

What's Included

Multiple designs for each break card type

- Student-requested break cards
- Three-box break cards
- Adult-offered break cards
- Five-minute walk cards
- Coordinating progress charts
- Directions for choosing and using the formats



Printable PDF • Not Editable • Print, Cut, and Laminate Cards