



Literacy at Hartford Public High School

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GUIDELINES FOR GOOD CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PRACTICE

<http://www.pacificnet.net/~mandel/ClassroomManagement.html>

There are many different practices that are used for good classroom management. Here is one teacher's opinion. **As with all classroom management practices, adapt what you like to your classroom**, taking account the age, ethnicity, and personality of the class as a group, and of you as a teacher. Maintaining good order in classrooms is one of the most difficult tasks facing young inexperienced teachers. The task has become more difficult over the past few decades as young people's attitudes to people in authority have changed dramatically. Some of the changes have led to greater self-confidence in students. Others--such as the acceptance of violence to achieve ends, attitudes to substance abuse and an increasing lack of respect for authority--have made classroom management and life in school generally more difficult, and more demanding, on those who are charged with maintaining a positive learning environment.

Many disruptive behaviors in the classroom can be alleviated before they become serious discipline problems. Such behaviors can be reduced by the teacher's ability to employ effective organizational practices. Such practices are at the heart of the teaching process and are essential to establishing and maintaining classroom control.

The following set of organizational practices should help to establish effective control of the classroom by the teacher:

1. Get off to a good start.

The first "honeymoon" encounter between the teacher and the students is when they formulate their impressions of the teacher. Students sit quietly, raise their hands to respond and are generally well behaved. The teacher is easily misled into thinking that this is an ideal class and may relax their vigilance. Students within a week will begin to test the waters to see what they can "get away with". It is during this period that the effective teacher will establish the expected ground-rules for classroom behavior.

2. Learning School Policies.

Prior to meeting the class for the first time, the teacher should become familiar with school policies concerning acceptable student behavior and disciplinary procedures. The teacher should definitely know what the school expects from both student and teacher in regard to discipline.

3. Establishing Rules.

Establish a set of classroom rules to guide the behavior of students at once. Discuss the rationale of these rules with the students to ensure they understand and see the need for each rule. Keep the list of rules short. The rules most often involve paying attention, respect for others, excessive noise, securing materials and completion of homework assignments.

4. Overplaning Lessons.

"Overplan" the lessons for the first week or two. It is important for the teacher to impress on the students from the outset that he or she is organized and confident of their ability to get through the syllabus.

5. Learning Names.

Devise a seating arrangement whereby students' names are quickly learned. Calling a student by his or her name early in the year gives the student an increased sense of well being. It also gives a teacher greater control of situations. "JOHN, stop talking and finish your work" is more effective than "Let us stop talking and finish our work".

6. Be Firm and Consistent.

A teacher can be firm yet still be supportive and friendly with students. A firm teacher can provide an environment where the students feel safe and secure. Many teachers report that it is easier to begin the year in a firm manner and relax later, than to begin in a lax manner and then try to become firm.

Expert Questions

from What Smart Student Know, Adams

Each subject has its own unique set of questions about itself that must be asked and answered systematically if you are to understand it. For example, questions about geology might include the following:

- What is this made of?
- What are its chemical, physical, and textural properties?
- How can this be identified?
- What process causes this?
- What other processes tend to happen at the same time?
- Where is this usually found?
- What else is usually found with or near this?
- What processes can cause this to change, and in what ways?
- What can I tell about the history of this?

These are not the questions that one would ask about English or psychology, each of which has its own set of unique questions.

These are fill-in-the-blank questions. To use them, simply substitute whatever term you are reading about for the word *this* in the list above.

- What is limestone made of?
- How can basalt be identified?
- What process causes volcanoes?
- Where is sedimentary rock usually found?
- What can I tell about the history of slate?

To help their students understand the content of a course, teachers should clearly identify those unique questions that get to the heart of the topic being studied.

