

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES AND FIRST YEAR INSTRUCTORS

THOMAS F. FREEMAN HONORS COLLEGE

SENIOR THESIS

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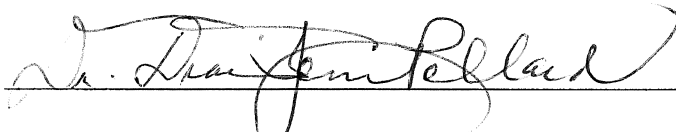
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ABSTRACT

The first year for an educator can be difficult. Learning new systems, new teaching tools, and new rules for a particular school district can be daunting for a teacher who is fresh out of college. On the other hand, many first-time instructors have no issues maneuvering these obstacles; however, they fail when it comes to classroom management skills. Finding time for the lesson, students, and themselves is a difficult feat. The focus of this study looks at four distinct and versatile classroom strategies: mastering transitions, fostering and building relationships between students and teachers, utilizing collaboration projects, and establishing a clear classroom routine. Effective classroom management requires awareness, patience and good timing. Thus, if first year educators arm themselves with these four important strategies, they will have all they need to manage a successful classroom and a successful first year.

I. Mastering transitions

A. Smooth transitions will avoid confusion among students which will save class time.

B. Instructional strategies used to teach transition skills include;

1. Providing a consistent routine ensuring every transition is smooth and free from disruption
2. Preparing the students in advance.
3. Observing student follow-through. Make sure you know where they fail, and succeed so you can change your strategy for next time.

II. Fostering and building relationships

A. Students are not defined by test scores, data, or learning objectives because they

worth more than that.

- B. School can be a joyful and exciting place to learn if healthy relationships are Promoted by teachers.

III. Utilizing collaboration projects

- A. Working as a team will increase confidence because students will gain support from their group members.
- B. Collaborative work allows for deeper thinking which enhances problem solving skills.

IV. Establishing a distinct classroom routine

- A. Many behavioral issues can be avoided if students are taught properly procedures they should follow in the classroom
- B. Routines encourage students to be self disciplined so they are not relying on the teacher's assistance the entire class time
- C. Routines allow it to be easier for students to learn and achieve more because classroom time will not be wasted

V. To have an effective classroom management plan, use these four strategies: master transitions, foster and build relationships, utilize collaboration projects, and establish a clear classroom routine.

- A. Effective transitions and having a classroom routine will allow you to save valuable class time.
- B. Building relationships with your students will allow you to avoid behavior issues, and research shows that students learn better from each other.

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VITA

Born	August 21, 1998 Born in Houston, TX
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents for their ceaseless support for my education, tireless encouragement at all hours of the night, and boundless love for me.

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Chapter I: Master Transitions

Every teacher dreams of the perfect well behaved class, but the reality can be quite different. Having a system in place helps you and your students stay on track on the not so perfect days. The teaching guide suggests that effective teachers choose to be professionals who strive to make a difference. Classroom management is not about discipline so students behave. It's about organization so students learn. The single greatest effect on student achievement is the effectiveness of the teacher. The students need to know how to take responsibility and know what there is to do so there is maximum engagement in the classroom activities (Denti, 2012). Transitions are open blocks of time in which students are not engaged in traditional learning, but are moving from one activity to another. Students go from one activity to another, from one class to another and from one teacher to another. There's recess time, lunch time, library time, assembly time, club time, and a load of other things happening at the school. Effective teachers have procedures that facilitate transition time. Wong H. K. (2018) found the key to a good transition is clarity, and simplicity of instruction. Teachers need to make sure to keep transitions short and simple. Students do not react well when told to do something right away. Preparing students for the transitions will allow them to be at ease. The students that are in the primary grades transition several times a day, providing many opportunities for off task behavior to occur. A recent study of 827 grade one classrooms indicated that students spend 17% of the school day in transitional activities that don't provide academic instruction (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development & Early Childhood Research Network, 2002). In contrast, Wharton McDonald et al., (1998) concluded that teachers who are able to complete quick transitions are able to increase academic learning throughout the day. While several factors

impact the loss of learning time (e. G. student absences, or office interruptions) teachers can directly impact the time students spend in academic transitions. Researchers acknowledge that minimizing transition times may maximize learning times in the early learning classroom (Caldwell, Huitt & Graeber, 1982; Thelen & Kilfman, 2011). When planning the environment to support learning, teachers want to minimize transitions in order to maximize the time students are engaged in academic activities (Caldwell et al., 1982). Transitions need to be planned out and smooth. Students should be prepared and know what to expect and how to do their part to help transition smoothly from one task to the next. “Plans are nothing, planning is everything.” - Dwight Eisenhower (Wong, H.K, 2018) Most failed transitions are the result of interruptions (Wong, H.K, 2018).

In order for instructors to maximize classroom time, first they must create an environment that is organized. Creating and maintaining transitions where students move from one activity to the next can be challenging. Transitions need to be planned out and run smoothly. Students should be prepared and know what to expect and how to do their part to help transition smoothly from one task to the next. They help classroom time be more productive, and positive. Consistency is key. Therefore, it is very important to have smooth, and well- rehearsed classroom transitions. Practice makes perfect.

Wong, H.K. (2018) suggested using a strategy called CPR. CPR is a type of transition. In the first step, the teacher announces to the class that it’s time for CPR, and students put away all the things they are working on. In the second step, students get what they need in order to complete the next activity. In the last step, teachers verbally or by posting it prior to the transition make the new activity clear. Something key to keep in mind is while students are completing steps one and two, they should not be listening to directions. If you see a student

struggling, give them a hand signal, or re explanation. If constant redirections are given, then the procedure was not short and simple.

According to Denti (2012), instructional strategies used to teach transition skills to students include preparing the students in advance, talking to them about the change; what is about to occur, and providing them with a consistent routine ensuring them that every transition they make is smooth and free from disruption. When explaining the transitions to the students, it is very important to check in with the students to make sure directions were understood. Explaining them right away at the beginning of the year will help establish the expectation effectively. Using visuals while explaining the transition can help aid the students to what is being expected. It is also important to keep in mind that transitions used on a regular basis will help develop a habit. Having students work cooperatively to master classroom transitions is also an effective strategy. If they can not be consistent, they should at least be in accordance with particular activities (Denti, 2012). Be careful not to ask rhetorical questions. So often teachers prompt students to take action with questions such as “Would everyone please take out a pencil? When the intention is “Take out a pencil. The semantics may be minor, but the difference in results is major. Requests give students the option of responding “yes, or no.” Give choices when available, but direct or command when no options are involved. Watch for this pattern in your requests and remind yourself to direct rather than ask.

Without planned strategies, transitions can be a classroom management fiasco. It is important to have the teacher give a verbal announcement of “five minutes left” before changing lessons, activities, or centers, etc. According to Wong, H.K., (2018), when it is time to change a variety of methods are used such as playing music, a snap/clap rhythm pattern led by a teacher, or ringing a bell. Students should already know what these different signals mean as long as it is

part of the routine. Using quick and easy attention grabbers to assist with transitions can help make them fun. These can also be used when students are moving from their desk to another area. When using these attention grabbers, one needs to make sure they use an enthusiastic voice, and to use them consistently. You should not use ten different attention grabbers on the same day. (Ertel, P. A. K., & Kovarik, M, 2016) Here are some examples of attention grabbers that can make transitions enjoyable: The first one is called Tootsie Roll. The teacher says “Tootsie roll lollipop we’ve been talking now let’s stop” The students repeat the same phrase back to her. Another one is called “Hocus Pocus.” The teacher says “Hocus Pocus!” and the students respond “Everybody focus!” while making goggles with their hands around their eyes. Another great attention grabber is called “Give me a clap.” The teacher says “Give me a clap. After each time the teacher says this particular sentence, the teacher claps twice. *claps twice * Give me a clap. *claps twice Give me a clap. Give me a snap *teacher snaps twice* Give me a snap *the teacher snaps twice, now fold your hands and put them down into your lap. The next one is called “Head, shoulders, knees, and lap” and is very similar to Head, shoulders, knees, and toes. The teacher says “Head shoulders knees and lap knees and lap, Head shoulders knees and lap knees and lap.” Another attention grabber that has students sit down in their seats goes like this “Everybody have a seat have a seat have a seat, everybody have a seat on the floor. Not on the ceiling, not on the door, everybody have a seat on the floor.” All these attention grabbers are so much better to use than just explicitly telling the students to be quiet, or to sit down. It makes the class more enjoyable. One attention grabber that allows a teacher to show the students how much she means to him/her goes like this: the teacher sings “How does my teacher feel about me? The students respond “I am as special as special can be, because my teacher believes in me. These

attention grabbers should not be used all at the same time, and one of them should be used for a whole month. After that month is over, you can use another one of these attention grabbers.

Call backs can also be used as great attention grabbers. One example of a call back is the teacher says “Hands on top”, and puts his/her hands on top of her head, and the students respond “Everybody stop” and puts their hands on top of their head. Another call back is called “Macaroni and cheese.” The teacher says “Macaroni and cheese” and the children respond with “Everybody freeze.” There’s a lot of more great ones like “Marco Polo.” The teacher says “Marco” and the students respond “Polo.” Or the teacher says “1,2,3 eyes on me,” and the students respond “1,2 eyes on you.” Another example of a call back is where the teacher says “Spaghetti” and the students respond “And meatballs!” Another last one is where the teacher says “Peanut butter” and the students respond “And jelly.” Using auditory signals and verbal cues to alert them that a transition is coming is another great strategy you can use for transitions (Arlin, 1979, Gangeles, 2000, Sainato, 1990; Smith, Rosenberg et al., 1997).

In my student teaching experience, I have seen that students often see transitions as an opportunity to release tension built up after long periods of passive instruction. However, short and efficient transitions from one activity to another maximize instructional time. Transitions can involve talking, laughing, moving joyfully, or listening to music. The music will create positivity in the classroom. We just need to be clear about what should be happening in the transition. Bad transitions can also cause attention loss. Noise level always tends to go up during transitions, and have a very huge impact on the climate of the classroom. Using time limits and countdowns allow one to save time. These tools cause students to work at a fast pace. The timer can help accommodate long transitions. Slowly counting down in an enthusiastic voice can help the students work quickly through transitions because this will set the classroom tone. Rewarding

students for quick and smooth transitions will encourage the behavior as well. Positive discipline focuses on positive behavior instead of negative ones. Rewards can come in the form of praise or encouragement. Praise is said verbally, and encouragement acknowledges effort that helps students recognize their effort (Pinto, L. E. 2013). Research by Cipani, 2008 shows rewards are better than punishment. However, intrinsic motivation is preferred. But, teachers get excellent student responses to positive reward systems. When positive reward systems were tested, it led to an increase of on task behavior. For example, one can give them team points/ individual points to the students/ student that finishes the fastest and had excellent behavior while doing so.

According to Green (2010),

Positive reinforcement is important because it gives an example of what is socially and individually rewarded and acknowledged. As you give positive reinforcement to students who remember to raise their hand before speaking or following other classroom rules, you are teaching the other students lessons about discipline as well as boosting the self esteem of those who follow the rules.

Other examples of rewards include snacks, permission to participate in a desirable activity, or a handwritten note. Denti, L. G. (2012) suggested that some activities to encourage positive behavior include a point system, where students can exchange points for prizes, fake money in which students can use to purchase items in the classroom store, homework pass, lunch with the teacher, Star of the week, and stickers.

Classroom time is valuable, so mastering transitions will allow teachers to get the most of it. It is very important to make transitions as enjoyable as possible. Transitions can help students take a mental break as well. I like to think of transitions being grouped into 3 different categories. The first is entering the classroom, taking a seat, moving from one activity to the next

activity, switching locations, or leaving the classroom. When misbehavior occurs during transitions, we need to be reflective of how specifically we taught the transitions. Some questions that you can ask yourself is if you gave enough clear explanations, and what students specifically were not willing to cooperate during the transition.

Using hand signals can also help to use transitions that do not require every student in the class. For example, a student can hold up one finger in the air to signal for help, he/she can raise two fingers to ask for a restroom or water break, and raising three fingers can mean that a student needs a new pencil, or their pencil needs to be sharpened. The most successful transitions between activities are quick and concise from beginning to end (Arlin, 1979, Gangelesi, 2000, Sainato, 1990; Smith, Rosenberg et al., 1997). Sometimes chaotic transitions happen because students don't know what to expect during the school day. Teachers can limit this confusion by following a daily schedule, and communicating with the students changes to the schedule if any, on a daily basis (Ayers & Heeden, 1996; Burden, 2003, Olson & Platt, 2000, Reis, 1988; Vartoli & Phelps, 1980). Both teachers and students should be well prepared for each new lesson or activity to minimize disruption occurrence (Burden 2003; Stainback & Stainback; 1996; Vartuli & Phelps, 1980). Materials should be accessible so that students can get them rapidly and easily (Fromberg & Driscoll, 1985; Olson & Platt, 2000). Finally, when students are required to move around the room or school between activities or lessons, transitions can be made smoother if the setting is arranged to facilitate the flow of students with a minimum of disruption (Burden, 2003, Cangelosi, 2000; Rosenberg et. al., 1997; Stainback & Stainback, 1996). For example, a teacher might signal students five minutes ahead of time and then again as the end of the activity gets closer, particularly for students that have trouble monitoring themselves and the pace of their

work or who tend to exhibit behavior problems when they feel rushed or “caught off guard” (Ayers & Heeden, 1996).

Researchers also recommended that teachers circulate among students during transition times, to attend to individual students’ needs and questions, help them prepare for the next task, and settle any minor disruptions before they escalate (Burden, 2003, Fromberg & Driscoll, 1985; Olson & Platt, 2000).

Chapter II - Fostering and Building Relationships

Schools exist for one reason only- for students to learn and achieve. The noblest of all professions is teaching. The success of each child hangs upon the effectiveness of their teaching. Efficient and effective teachers know what they are doing and do things right consistently (Wong, H.K, 2018). The teacher is the determiner of success in your classroom not only by the choices you make but most importantly through positive attitude and strong affirmation of your students (Wong, H.K, 2018). As said by Forest E. Witch, a professional scouter “A hundred years from now, it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house that I lived in, of the kind of car that I drove. But the world may be different because I was important in the life of a boy” (p. 304). As said by Wong H.K, (2018) we need to serve as an emotional, organizational, and instructional support. Great teachers have positive expectations for student success. Having positive expectations will show the student that the teacher believes in him/her. For student learning to take place, it is essential that the teacher exhibit positive expectations toward all students (Wong, H.K, 2018). How can we inspire students to want to cooperate and follow our rules? By being positive and encouraging (J., M. K. R., & Stanzione, 2010). No bribes or special rewards for getting them to do what they should be doing anyway. Research by J., M. K. R., & Stanzione, L. E. (2010) supported that children are most likely to cooperate when asked in a respectful manner. Encouraging messages inspire cooperation. Negative messages frequently have the opposite of their intended effect. They inspire resistance, not cooperation, and lead predictably to escalating misbehavior and power struggles (J., M. K. R., & Stanzione, L. E., 2010). Discouraging messages are the fuel for hurtful classroom dances. Owens (2013) explained that encouraging messages meet children’s needs for belonging, reaffirm feelings of competence

and self worth, and inspire children to tackle challenging tasks and problems on their own. They also create safety in the classroom and positive relationships between teachers and students.

If you carry an attitude that is positive and full of good expectations while maintaining a friendly disposition, your students will realize you are the leader of the classroom and will follow your lead. You need to learn about what exactly makes your students feel safe; this will give them a sense of security (Birnie, B.F., 2014). Getting to know your students will help you connect with them. It is not possible to connect with someone you know nothing about, even if you see them everyday. Connecting with your students is the most important step you will take in helping them reach success (Birnie, B. F., 2014). Not being able to connect with your students will cause you to feel stressed, and regret. However, you should not get emotionally involved with your students. Becoming emotionally involved can be dangerous, and can cause you to lose your ability to treat students equally (Pinto, L. E., 2013.) It is not your responsibility to be a friend to students. Your relationship with all students must be professional. You can be friendly without being a best buddy. Show you care, listen, and give advice, but remain the professional adult. According to Denti, L. G. (2012), you can be personable and communicate that you care, but you must draw a line of demarcation between you as teacher and them as students. Once you cross the line, it's extremely difficult to step back to the other side. Setting clear boundaries for student interaction helps students learn how to communicate effectively. For students in a classroom, personal boundaries must be established and have consequences when violated.

It is very important to build relationships with your students because this will help them understand that you care about them. Your students will not learn from someone that they do not like. Relating things to the students while teaching lessons is a great way to build relationships with them. It will allow you to build connections with them, and you will be able to learn about

things that they like and dislike. Building a relationship with each of your students will allow you to prevent behavior problems in the classroom. It will create a sense of belonging in your classroom which will allow for your students to feel that they are part of your team. According to Silverman (2019), “Building a stronger relationship with your students, will allow them to be able to see value in their work.”

Building relationships with your students starts from the very first day. It is extremely important to take time to forge these relationships by interacting with students. The way you introduce yourself to the students is important as well, and how you greet the students on the first day. The first day of school can determine how much you will achieve together for the rest of the school year. Students learn best when they are welcomed into a safe, organized, and consistent classroom. Teachers need to make sure that they feel as comfortable as possible (Wong, H.K., 2018). Showing your students that you care can be shown by simply greeting them each and every single class period. It might be a short moment, but it can be very meaningful. Greetings create a caring and constructive atmosphere that spreads throughout the classroom (Wong, H.K., 2018). In the classroom where the teacher greeted the students at the door, there was an increase in student engagement by thirty two percent. This percentage was based off of who worked on their assignments, and did not misbehave. In the second study, students got on task faster when they were greeted at the door in comparison to the control class that was not greeted (Wong, H.K, 2018).

As said by John Maxwell, “students don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” The first couple of months, teachers need to pay special attention to the social domain of their classroom. According to Denti, L. G. (2012), teachers need to share personal stories to show the students that he/ she cares, and encourage them to share at a suitable time as

well. According to Pink (2018), “Team building is a great way to promote relationships and develop the best climate for teachers and students. Learning names within the first week and using activities that help “break the ice” can support a year of respect, understanding and learning. Icebreakers and team building to help create an environment where both teachers and learners want to take risks. One activity that can be used as an icebreaker with your students is called show and tell. Students will be instructed to bring in a special item that has a lot of significance to them. Students can bring a picture, toys, or something special that was given to them by a special person. Students will sit in a circle together as a class, and talk about their item to the class. Everyone will go around to share their item and the significance. Another activity that can be used as an icebreaker with your students is called letter writing. However, this specific icebreaker is to be used at the beginning of the year. The teacher will write a letter about herself in which she/he will talk about the hobbies one has, where he/she lives, if you have any children or pets, etc. Each student will get a letter, and instruct them to write on the back of the letter, but talking about themselves with similar information that the teacher wrote about herself/himself on the front. The next icebreaker is called the “What am I game.” Each student will get a sticky note. On the sticky note, everyone will write down a noun. Each person will stick their sticky note on their forehead. Then, students will get in groups of two. Each student will take turns asking a yes/no question that will help them guess what noun they have written on their specific sticky note. Students will be able to give clues other than the yes or no questions so that they can figure out what noun is written on the sticky note. If students ask questions, and they still can not figure out the noun with the clues as well, the person on the right gets to ask a question about their noun. Everyone will keep playing this game until every noun is guessed, or the noun is expired. The icebreaker called “Grapes' ” is very fun and builds a collaborative

atmosphere when played. For this icebreaker, you need a lot of space, so the desks will have to be pushed to one side. The teacher will say a number out loud, and students will have to form the number that she says in groups. For example, if the teacher says six grapes, the students will have to get in a group of six people. When they get in groups, they will have to hug each other so that the teacher can distinguish where the groups are being formed. The students that are not able to be in the groups are out of the game. The game will go on until there is only one person standing. A teacher can also call one grape in which the students will stand with their hands on their sides by themselves. An icebreaker called “lines” can be used in many different ways. This icebreaker is quick, and easy. It allows the students to see what they have in common, and allows them to move around and walk. Students will line up, or get in a group with the similar things they have in common. For example, some prompts that can be used with this icebreaker are: line up in chronological order of your birthdays, line up in the order of how many siblings you have, for those who are allergic to the same thing as you, and in alphabetical order of mother’s names. Students can also get into groups of similar things that they have. For example, those who traveled by car to school, those who traveled by bus, and those who traveled another way. Or, those who have the same colored clothing as you. Two truths and a lie is a great activity that will allow students to learn more about each other. Students will also learn what things they have in common. Students will be handed an index card where they will write three statements down. Two of these statements have to be true, and one of these statements has to be a lie. Students will be paired up in groups for this activity, and they will be able to ask follow up questions to learn which of the statements that they wrote on their index card is a lie. One very simple yet, collaborative icebreaker is just generating a list of questions that will allow the students to talk about themselves. This is a fun activity that will allow students to get to know each other better.

Here are some questions that you can use in that icebreaker list: If you could have an endless supply of any type of food, what would you get? If you were an animal, what would you be and why? What is one goal you would like to accomplish during your lifetime? What are your favorite hobbies? If you had to describe yourself in three words, which words would you use? Some questions for upper grade students include: Would you rather go into the past and meet your ancestors or go into the future and meet your great-great grandchildren? Would you rather have more time or more money? Would you rather have a rewind button or a pause button in your life? Would you rather be able to talk with the animals or speak all foreign languages? Would you rather win a lottery or live twice as long? Would you feel worse if no one showed up to your wedding or to your funeral? Would you rather be without the internet for a week, or without your phone? Would you rather meet George Washington, or the current president? Would you rather lose your vision or your hearing? Would you rather work more hours per day, but fewer days or work fewer hours per day, but more days? Would you rather listen to music from the 70's or music from today? Would you rather become someone else or just stay with you? Would you rather be Batman or Spiderman? Would you rather go to a movie or to dinner alone? Would you rather say everything on your mind or never speak again? Would you rather make a phone call or send a text? Would you rather read an awesome book or watch a good movie? Would you rather be the most popular person at work or school or be the smartest? Would you rather put a stop to war or end world hunger? Would you rather spend the night in a luxury hotel room or camping surrounded by beautiful scenery? Would you rather explore space or the ocean? Would you rather go deep sea diving or bungee jumping? Would you rather be a kid your whole life or an adult your whole life? Would you rather go on a cruise with friends or with your spouse? Would you rather lose your keys or your cell phone? Would you rather eat a

meal of cow tongue or octopus? Would you rather have x-ray vision or magnified hearing? Would you rather work in a group or work alone? Would you rather be stuck on an island alone or with someone who talks incessantly? Would you rather be too hot or too cold? “Never have I ever been” a great icebreaker that also helps students get to know each other better. Everyone needs to sit together in a circle, and take turns saying what they have never done. The goal of this game is to be the last player remaining. Sprick (2009), found that these activities should be used throughout the year so students can continue to respect one another, understand their differences, and backgrounds. Activities should try to include movement as well.

You can start every class period by doing a group check in. Some questions that you can ask students during their group check in is if they would like to share any life updates, and how they are really doing? However, before beginning these group check ins, it is very important to establish the ground rules with the students. Classes can be very vocal, and it gets hard to have equitable opportunities for students to participate. All students in the class might want to participate, or the check in might be dominated by several individuals during the large group check-ins. To offer a more equitable distribution of time, a talking stick can help. A talking stick is symbolic in that the individual that is speaking has the floor (Pinto, L. E., 2013). You can use a talking stick in which the only person that is allowed to speak is the person holding the talking stick. Once that person is done speaking, they can pass it to the next speaker. These group check-ins can last anywhere between 2-5 minutes. These group check ins can also serve as reflections, and discussions to develop a set of community agreements to work towards creating an environment of respect and rapport. A question that you can ask your students is when was a time that you felt unsafe, unrecognized, or unheard. After they have told you about the time, you can ask them to think about what could have been done to prevent these feelings.

Maintaining a positive and organized classroom setting free from disruption is critical to providing an instructional environment conducive to teaching and learning (Skiba, R., Ormiston, H., et. al., 2016). Classrooms with quality teacher student relationships have fewer “classroom behavior problems and better academic performance (O’ Connor, Dearing, & Collins, 2011). According to Pinto, L. E. (2013) classroom meetings that are held on an ongoing basis can also help establish relationships with students. A few days before the meeting, the teacher should remind students of the upcoming meeting. The teacher also need to discuss with the class the rules that must be followed in order for the class meeting to be held accordingly. An agenda should be posted, and one should allow for students to offer issues that they would like to be discussed in the meeting. A suggested format for class meetings are:

- Welcome & Agenda (5 minutes)
- Class News (5 minutes)
- Issues brought forward by students (10-15 minutes)
- Suggestions or ideas that would improve learning (10-15 minutes)
- Closure (1-2 minutes)

Having a problem solving chart on the wall when the meeting deals with solving class problems is a great idea that can help give students guidance.

Research at the University of Wisconsin Research and Development Center indicated that both the behavior and performance of students improved with the use of periodic one-on-one conferences with students (Ban, 1994). HAT is an acronym that stands for “How Are Things?” It represents what a one-on-one conference should be about. These conferences should be held on a regular ongoing basis, that should last at least five minutes. One-on-one conferences should be scheduled every three weeks, with each student in the class. Having these meetings will allow for

your students to see that you care about them by actually attending to what is happening to them in class and out of class. If it is appropriate, you can also volunteer to help students with personal or behavior problems (Pinto, L. E., 2013).

Community circles is one strategy you can use to help build relationships with your students (Silverman, J., 2019). A question that you can ask in community circles is “What is something we are feeling stressed out about or struggling with in our classes this week?” Some implications for this community circle topic for the teacher include: incorporate ways to navigate stress relief skills into future lessons. The lessons that they can learn while discussing this topic in their community circle is the realization that they are not the only ones feeling stressed out, learn new ways to cope with this stress, learn how to communicate with peers as they contribute their response to the group, and the realization that they might have something in common with a classmate that they do not know very well. Another possible question you can ask in community circles is “What is one thing you are most proud of in your role as a friend to someone this past month?” Some implications for the teacher in this community circle include: incorporating ways to develop healthy friendships into future lessons. Lessons that students can learn while engaged in this community circle is ways they can be a good friend, patience because they will be listening to each of their classmates’ responses while waiting for the talking stick to be passed to them, and the realization that they might have something in common with a classmate that they do not know much about. Community circles offer students the chance to express themselves, and build trust. According to Silverman J., (2019) community circles provide teachers a window into the social, emotional, and academic needs of their students that they otherwise may not learn. Teachers can use this data to build lessons that respond to the needs of the community expressed in the circle. By creating time each week or even daily to come together in community

circles, many important social emotional building skills are learned and healthy, respectful classroom communities result. Effective schools take responsibility for creating a culture that focuses on relationships, trust, and respect in addition to fostering the academic success of students.

The classroom is a community, and students need to be active and vital in that community. They can collect papers, clean up the room, Horticulturist (plant keeper) tend plants, assist other students, and even help teach. Some more examples of classroom jobs teachers can implement are Board cleaner, attendance officer, line leader first person in line and responsible for leading the class in the hallway, caboose is the last person in line, and responsible for closing the door when you leave the classroom, lights monitor, materials manager, and the librarian makes sure the library is neat and organized.

Gordon (2007) described the benefits of loving people you associate with in any type of setting such as schools and places of business. He suggested that this outpouring of love enhances a group's enthusiasm, productivity, and performance. But what does that love look like and how can you show love to your students? These suggestions may help you love your students: spend time with them, learn about them as persons, ask about their hobbies and interests beyond the classroom, recognize their efforts and successes, and make an effort to bring out the best in each student (Birnie, B. F. 2014) Marzano and Marzano found that teachers who had strong relationships with their students had fewer discipline problems than teachers who did not. They suggested the following habits to build positive relationships with students: greet students by name when they arrive to the classroom, compliment students (e. g. Haircut, achievement, or sport accomplishment) attend student's extracurricular activities, ask questions about their interests, and listen to their concerns (Birnie, B. F. 2014) Positive relationships can

also help a student develop socially. It impacts students academic and social development. Teachers that foster positive relationships with their students create a classroom environment more conducive to learning and meet students' developmental, emotional, and academic needs (Rimm-Kaufman, S., & Sandilos, L, 2020) Students are less likely to avoid school, are more cooperative, and engaged in learning (Birch & Ladd, 1997, Decker, Dona, and Christenson (2007; Klem & Connell, 2004).

Some tips to develop positive relationships with your students include show pleasure and enjoyment of students, help students reflect on their thinking and learning skills, and acknowledge the importance of peers in schools by encouraging students to be caring and respectful to each other. It is important to always call students by their names, find out information about their interests, and work hard to comprehend what they need to succeed in school (Croninger & Lee, 2001; Whitlock, 2006). Knowing your students interests can help you incorporate these interests into the classroom. For example: a student that loves basketball comes to you with a question about a math problem, you might respond to her with a problem involving basketball. The students that are difficult and or shy just need some extra effort in spending time with them (Pianta, 1999) Just try to find a time and place where you can have a positive discussion with the problem student. Notice and mention the positive behaviors that they have. Rudasill, Rimm Kaufman, Justice, and Pence, 2006; Spangler Aundt, Gazelle, & Faldowski, 2011). Another way to show students that you care about them is to give them meaningful feedback. It will show them that you care about their learning. It is important to use the correct body language, facial expression, and tone of voice when speaking to your students because this will show them you are interested.

Chapter III. Utilizing collaboration projects

Research suggests that many teachers are underprepared for the behaviors that their students may bring to the classroom, resulting in challenges to teaching and learning (Flower, et. al., 2016) It is very important to incorporate as much collaborative work as possible because working as a team will increase confidence because students will gain support from their group members. Collaboration is everybody working together. We have differences naturally but we have to work over those differences and just make the client's life better. Just like work in the hospital. Everybody's different. You don't have to agree with somebody all the time but we have to work together as a team to provide the best services (Shepherd et. al., 2016). Collaborative work also allows for deeper thinking which enhances problem solving skills. Students learn best from each other. Utilizing collaboration assignments can also help students build a better relationship with their classmates, and get to know each other better. When students are working on assignments for class, it's important to have most of these assignments in which they can work together to help each other. Working together will allow students to learn communicative skills, compromise, and collective effort.

Student collaboration is a valuable skill that students will be able to use lifelong. When creating activities in which students will be working together towards a common goal, it is very important to make them as complex as possible, but not too complex to the point that the students can not complete the assignment. Making the assignment complex will allow students to see a reason for the collaboration that they are being involved in. A complex assignment or project has too many pieces to work alone, and is difficult. Complex activities are challenging, engaging, stimulating, and multilayered. Complex activities require "positive interdependence" (Johnson, Johnson & Holubec, 2008), a situation in which attaining the goal, completing the

task, being successful, and getting a good grade require that the team work together and share knowledge. One way to do this is through rigorous projects that require students to identify a problem (for example, balancing population growth in their city with protection of existing green spaces) and agree—through research, discussion, debate, and time to develop their ideas—on a solution which they must then propose together (Burns, 2016).

Learning to work effectively with others will allow for these collaboration projects to run smoothly. Therefore, it is extremely important to teach team building skills. Teachers have to help students understand the what, why, and how of collaboration (Burns, 2016). Teachers can guide students through the stages of team building. They can also give students time and opportunities within the activity to develop leadership, decision-making, trust-building, communication, and conflict-management skills. Establish expectations and norms for working together is something very important to keep in mind when first letting the students go to work for their collaboration projects. The teacher must also design, or have students design, protocols for handling conflict disagreement so they can resolve issues within their teams. Teaching students active listening skills is also very important.

When students complain about collaborative groups, it often has to do with the free riding of one member who lets others do all the work and then benefits from the group grade. We can eliminate free riding in a number of ways: Create small groups of no more than four or five people. When there is less room to hide, nonparticipation is more difficult.

Ensure a high degree of individual accountability (Johnson, Johnson & Holubec, 2008) by assessing students both individually and as a group. For example, at the end of the day give students an individual quiz based on the intended outcome of their collaborative activity. Designing meaningful team roles that relate to the content and to the task can increase

participation. Roles like timekeeper are episodic and don't intellectually engage students in the content, and this can encourage free riding. In contrast, more meaningful roles such as manager, monitor, and leaders for each subtask of the activity give students ownership in the process and allow the teacher to assess students based on successful completion of these roles.

At the end of the collaboration assignment, it is important to have students evaluate their own participation and effort and that of each team member and triangulate those assessments with your own. Many group projects are based on efficiency, dividing labor to create a product in the most effective way possible. This focus on the product means that we often ignore the process of collaboration. Rich discussions that connect students with the experiences of others, that engage them deeply in a shared intellectual experience, and that promote coming to consensus are essential to collaboration. For instance, students can come to consensus around a solution or decision where they must defend or propose a common vision or develop a set of beliefs or principles. This focus on discussion and consensus builds both academic and social skills—students learn to defend their ideas through evidence and analytical reasoning, to negotiate meaning, and to argue constructively (Burns, 2016).

The challenge of designing good collaborative activities is ensuring that all students, even those who struggle, play an important role. Collaboration should not just strengthen students' existing skills but ensure that their interactions stretch existing knowledge and expand one another's expertise. If, for example, a student is much stronger in one skill than her peers in her group, she can teach others and her grade can be contingent upon how much her peers learn (Burns, 2016).

In collaborative activities, we want to ensure that students don't just occupy the same physical space but that they share an intellectual space—that they learn more, do more, and

experience more together than they would alone. As teachers, we can promote real collaboration by shifting our role from instructor to coach—promoting team autonomy, checking in on students and providing instant feedback, and helping them increasingly learn to work together productively to attain a common goal (Burns, 2016).

Importantly, collaboration also requires each team member to make effective use of social and interpersonal skills, including listening, giving and receiving feedback, problem solving and conflict resolution. It is widely acknowledged that these skills are complex and may need to be supported and developed over time (Friend and Cook, 2014). That is why it is very important to incorporate these assignments so students can develop these skills over time. When there will be collaboration projects assigned, there needs to be expectations set so that students can work to their fullest potential. As suggested by Shepherd et. al., (2016)

The use of positive interpersonal skills, including the ability to listen, express one's feelings, and engage in discussion for the purpose of gaining understanding and resolving differences that arise. Many parents described these characteristics in their definitions of true collaboration. There must be equal participation. People truly engaged in a process. And people being open and interested in hearing what everyone has to say and discussing things.

Comments about the need for trust, frequent communication, effective facilitation, and information-sharing serve as reminders of the importance of viewing collaboration as a developmental process that, when done well, can embrace conflict as an opportunity to hear diverse viewpoints, consider a range of solutions, develop common ground, and select solutions that are acceptable to all team members (Shepherd et. al., 2016).

So why isn't collaboration being implemented in all school districts that have English language learners—even in those districts that have a small number of ELL students? The three biggest reasons are resources and funds, school leadership, and curriculum and time constraints (Sasson, 2014). As the school day goes by, there are many opportunities that a teacher has to pair students up, or place students in groups. When students are working on an assignment that requires a lot of work, and will be lengthy to finish, that is the perfect time for a teacher to place the students into groups so they can finish the assignment quickly. The only time really that they should be allowed to work independently one hundred percent of the time is when they are taking a test.

There are many types of collaborative projects that a teacher can implement into her classroom to get the students to work together. Using technology in the classroom is really important. There is this website called Kahoot, that allows teachers to create interactive quizzes. When completing these quizzes, students are to answer the questions on their electronic devices provided by the school, and or their own personal handheld devices. Students can answer these questions in groups so that they will be given a chance to work together, or they can answer independently which will then allow the teacher to see what each student can do on their own without peer assistance. Teachers can also have students complete a project together by assigning each student a specific role. It is very important to keep in mind the expectations that are required by the students when working on these activities as well.

Chapter IV: Establishing a distinct classroom routine

It is extremely important to have a classroom routine that is consistent in the classroom. This prevents a lot of misbehavior, which in turn will save valuable class time. It is important to stick to this routine daily because students will not get into the habit. Spend as much time as necessary- days, weeks, if necessary explaining the rules. Don't let the students get up to throw things away or sharpen pencils without permission. Do not ever yell. Acknowledge good behavior as opposed to just bad behavior. At the end of class, allowing them to leave only in groups, not all at once (Owens, 2013) Routines are the foundation of classroom management. Students require structure in their lives. Routines provide that in all their life from the time they awake until the time they go to bed. Routines in a school and in the classroom provide the environment for learning to take place.

Many students misbehave because they want to be noticed by the teacher or other students. In fact, Dreikurs (1968) claimed that 90% of misbehavior is to gain attention. Ignore misbehavior, avoid acknowledging behavior when possible or manage it quickly. Student restroom breaks need to not interrupt class time or other students. Some schools already have a specific procedure, but if one is not in place, hand signals can help. A student can make a hand signal to show he needs to go to the restroom instead of interrupting the class. The teacher can nod her head to show that she saw what the student needs and the student can go to the restroom. Behaviors- good or bad- are learned over time. The student who continually calls out may have learned through previous classroom experiences that this response was one way to get the teacher's attention- even if the attention was negative. Just as the behavior developed over time,

so will the correcting behavior. This is like relearning in baby steps. Teacher addresses the situation rather than the student's character. In addressing behavioral issues, the teacher makes it clear that he or she is upset with the student's behavior (action or reaction), not the student. Teachers should never use sarcasm (Ertel, et. al., 2016). Procedures and expectations set the stage for managing the classroom and student behaviors. Once the stage is set, teachers must develop a rapport with the students to affect student behavior and nurture learning. Teachers must go beyond simply accepting students. They must provide them with attention, show appreciation for them, affirm their desirable traits, and show them unconditional affection, kindness, and caring. Choice in behavior management is less about offering multiple options and more about informing students of the expectation or rule and the consequence for not following it. By presenting your expectations for a change in student behavior, and the result of not changing, you place the responsibility for a decision to change (or not) with the student. Consequences must be respectful, reasonable, related to the offense, and reliably enforced in order to be valuable (Ertel, et. al., 2016). Doing what you say you'll do is essential to successful management. Classroom rules. Develop these rules with the students, phrasing each rule with a positive manner rather than creating a list of "Don'ts" Remember to limit the number of rules and post them in a very visible space. With the students develop consequences for broken rules. Take time to rehearse the procedures you implement into your classroom. Get students engaged and set the tone of the classroom for the day with a morning activity written on the overhead, blackboard, or easel near the door. Seeing a set task as they enter the classroom helps students quickly transition to the day's agenda. Daily tasks work best when students can easily jump in and do the work in 5-10 minutes, without asking questions to you, or their classmates (Ertel, et. al., 2016).

Studies have shown that classroom management routines have a direct impact on social and children's emotional development in addition to cognitive growth, and reduces behavior problems (Ostrosky, et al., 2003). They also can directly impact children's motivation and engagement levels (Wright, 2014), and significantly impact teacher retention rates in relation to re-maining in the profession (Smith, & Ingerso, 2004). Implementing routines, to ensure a safe and secure learning environment takes time and effort, however, it is time well spent and considered the "backbone of daily classroom life" (Murry, 2002). Routines, critical to maximizing learning opportunities, are best established at the beginning of the year to set the tone for the remainder of the school year. They must be taught, modeled, and rehearsed for students to identify the skills and expectations necessary for "classroom health" (k5chalkbox, n.d.), and to initiate students' self-directed learning. Effective teachers with established routines, spend a great deal of time planning prior to the start of each new school year, and report having fewer discipline issues paving the way for good instruction (Rawlings, et. al., 2017)

According to Aquila (1992), "A teacher who employs time management principles will handle routine functions quickly and efficiently, leaving more time for important education matters" such as "improving student performance, developing interpersonal relationships, and making programmatic improvements. They will, in essence, be "working smarter, not harder". He suggested 12 simple strategies to help educators with time management, many of which still are applicable in conjunction with today's

technological advancements. Being aware of time, and keeping track on how much time is spent on non-instructional matters, is a first step in classroom time management (Aquila, 1992; Moore, 2011). The next step would be to establish and plan priorities in your teaching schedule by listing tasks and then analyzing each based on categories of low and high priorities. Pinnell

(2003) recommends being “ruthless” with low-priority items, and using “in-between time” for incidental teaching ings such as reviewing a mini lesson in the five minutes before lunch time. In addition to teachers’ attention on time management, students also need to learn strategies to help them manage their own personal time appropriately. Glazer (2003) suggests using a variety of tools, such as egg timers or sports timers, to help in this endeavor and meet behavioral goals. For example, students could use a “Watch the Clock ” tool with a set time goal of finishing a specific task. Once the task is completed, feedback from the teacher can help students modify or change behaviors in order to help them meet intended goals on subsequent attempts. Classroom management refers to all the things that a teacher does to orga- nize space, time, and materials in the physical classroom in preparation for student learning (Rischer, 2008). School climate is a term that has been used for over a hundred years in relation to the environment that has the most impact on academic learning and success. According to the National School Climate Center (NSCC), school climate refers to “the quality and character of school life”, and is based on “patterns of students’, parents’ and school personnel’s experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures” (as cited in Smith, Connolly, & Pryseski, 2014). Pedota (2007) believes that preparing the classroom and developing classroom management routines.

As well, by planning for positive stu- dent-teacher relationships, consideration of classroom management, procedures, behavior, and instruction are considered. By considering both classroom arrangement and responsible students, teachers must allow time for taking care of complaints and celebrating achievements (Simola, 1996).

Research also shows that the physical environment directly and indirectly impacts teaching-learning processes (Rooh-ul-Ain Laiqa, et al., 2011). Pedota (2007) offers strategies for

building a positive school, or classroom, climate which includes, showcasing student work, facilitating traffic flow and teacher movement around the room, posting school and class rules to remind students of code of conduct, and avoiding unnecessary distractions. Showcasing students' work on walls and bulletin boards throughout the classroom, leads to student ownership, sense of community, and an overall positive classroom environment. It also shows other stakeholders what students are learning about in their classroom.

According to Cange- losi (2014), "student engagement and on-task behaviors depend on how well the momentum is maintained and how smoothly teachers transition from one activity to another" (p. 74). Learning activities have several parts: Planning, Examples, Sequencing, Practice, and Assessments. Effective learning activities are prepared ahead of time (Feldman, 2003), and are also planned so that they are exciting, applicable, experiential, energizing, useful, contain higher order thinking opportunities, and are interdisciplinary. The following factors should be considered when planning for activities; balance of activities, tempo and pace, children's attentions span and at what times they are most alert, availability of extra adults in the room, other things going on such as l-out programs, and the fact that longer play equates to an increase in play behaviors (Ostrosky, et al., 2003). A popular best practice used in today's classrooms as an introductory activity is the "Bell-ringer," also known as warm-ups, or "do now activities", and primarily provides teachers with time to address non-academic tasks such as attendance and checking homework (Thom- as, 2006; Feldman, 2003). These introductory activities can also be used as a formative assessment to facilitate small group instruction. Glazer (2003) and Thomas (2006) suggest writing directives on the board in the same place every day in order to train students. Another aspect when planning learning activities is to take into consideration the placement of technology in relation to the specific use such as transitioning

from one display to multiple screens, or with the physical access to technology in the classroom or in a different location (Tondeur, et al., 2015).

Effective teaching practices include classroom management routines that focus on organization of the classroom environment, developing student accountability, maintaining good student behavior, conducting instruction and maintaining momentum, and getting off to a good start. Effective classroom management routines “combine structure and fairness with clear expectations in a caring, non threatening environment” (Dreikurs, Grunwald, & Pepper, 1971; Glasser, 1998), and accentuate the positive over the negative (Pedota, 2007). Lesson plans should be well thought out and include routines for handling transitions from one activity to the next, and for differentiated learning. Jordan, et al. (2009) found that teachers are more effective with all students when they plan for, and accept their responsibility, for students with special needs. By enhancing teaching practices for the inclusion student - all students benefit overall. Many instructional strategies, such as student centered instruction, technology integration applications, and gradual release of responsibility all require careful planning, and effective implementation is dependent on classroom management routines put in place (Frey, 2010). Teacher lessons should also emphasize the importance in learning through higher taxonomy levels (discovery, creativity, application, adaptation, and higher level thinking). Jones (2003) believes that in stressing the importance learning in these ways strengthens “students’ knowledge and achievement for lifelong success, however, again “reiterates the need for a positive atmosphere, rituals, and procedures.” Cruickshank, et al., (2006).

Chapter V: Conclusion

Every teacher dreams of the perfect well behaved class, but the reality can be quite different. Having a system in place helps you and your students stay on track on the not so perfect days. The teaching guide suggests that effective teachers choose to be professionals who strive to make a difference. Classroom management is not about discipline so students behave. It's about organization so students learn. The single greatest effect on student achievement is the effectiveness of the teacher. The students need to know how to take responsibility and know what there is to do so there is maximum engagement in the classroom activities (Denti, 2012). Transitions are open blocks of time in which students are not engaged in traditional learning, but are moving from one activity to another. Students go from one activity to another, from one class to another and from one teacher to another. There's recess time, lunch time, library time, assembly time, club time, and a load of other things happening at the school. Effective teachers have procedures that facilitate transition time. Wong H. K. (2018) found the key to a good transition is clarity, and simplicity of instruction. Teachers need to make sure to keep transitions short and simple. Students do not react well when told to do something right away.

Teachers can use these strategies to strengthen their classroom management and it will allow teachers to build a closer relationship with their students. Mastering transitions, fostering and building relationships, and utilizing collaboration projects are the most important strategies to focus on when doing your strategies for your classroom.

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