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**Importance of Content**

The most important thing for a teacher to do is be available to answer questions; but sometimes students don’t participate during class or think of questions after class. To address this issue, I’d made a “Questions” box. The students fill out a little form and write down their question on it. I also provide my school email address to students so they can email a question if they would prefer. I encourage students to ask questions and let them know there are no “stupid” questions. Lastly, I do my best to answer the question as quickly as possible. By making the students questions a priority that will show the students that they matter and that the content matters. I will make it clear that these options are available as long as the students do not abuse the privilege. Respect and self-responsibility are important in the classroom.

First impressions do mean a lot, so that is why I want my classroom to be as interesting as possible. The room seems warmer and more inviting by having various science posters (with multiple races and genders) throughout the room, as well as other decorations (past science projects, interests, newspaper clippings). In high school I had a teacher who had pets in her classroom (boa constrictor, tarantula, and fish). Another teacher had preserved fetuses in her room (deer, pig, and bird), as are in my current classroom. Those are interesting to students, making the classroom fun and inviting. The classroom should be welcoming and interesting.

After learning the interests of the students, decorating can be brought in from there. Newspaper clippings of athletic events, both from the school and professional sports, have a place in the room. Acknowledging students’ good work in sports, science fair, clubs, etc. also demonstrates to the students that the teacher is concerned about them.
Attending events has also worked well as a way to demonstrate concern for the students.

I believe all of these strategies are important to develop a good rapport with students. Rapport is important in the development of the students, personally and academically. Showing the students how science applies to real life is important as well. I do this by giving real life examples and/or relating topics to parts of the lives of students. Giving examples to relate the content to real life draws the students’ attention. Just mentioning that people with math and science backgrounds tend to make more money is a way to catch the students’ interest. Relating topics to sports or farming are good ways to relate to the students in this area. Demonstrating how knowledge is power and fully believing it, this attitude transfers to the students.

Management of Transitions

Part of how I manage transitions is by having the day’s objectives posted. This gives students a sense of what is going on, what to expect, and a goal of the day. Also, by always having the objectives posted, it gives the students a sense of consistency in the classroom. There is also a prompt (of a Science Talk\textsuperscript{sm}, quote, or question on the chapter) on the board for every class. The students write on this prompt in their science journals. This gives the students an academic activity to do while I take attendance. The daily journals will also add to the class consistency.

Even though the students may feel pressured, I give time limits to any labs and worksheets. This reinforces the concept of student responsibility and time management in the class. I remind the students of the time restrictions and behavior rules if it seems that the talking is heading off subject. By keeping the students busy (with the prompt, activities, and closing) the talking is diminish. As a closing I ask the students questions
about the objectives of the day and remind them of assignments and events.

**Expectations**

Part of my expectations for my classes is that they keep a folder of the class. The first page in the folder is the expectations page given to the students at the beginning of the year. The expectations page includes behavior and academic (like a syllabus) behaviors. My first and most important expectation is the students be prompt, prepared, polite, and productive. Each student also has an expectations page signed by their parents and turned back into me. This also includes my school email and phone number so parents can reach me.

The first day of class we go over all the expectations. Behavior expectations and the class syllabus are posted on the wall as well. Everyday, I write one of the behavior expectations (that were previously addressed at the beginning of the year) on the board. This way the students will be reminded of the expectations, without having to verbally go over them again (which I think would make the students feel like children).

**Monitoring of Student Behavior**

The way I will monitor student behavior is by placing responsibility on the students. In my classroom the students will be treated as adults, as long as the students continue to behave like adults. From the beginning of the year I will inform students of this expectation. I believe students respond well to high (but achievable) expectations as well as giving them responsibility (even if it is just for their own behavior). Consistency is also something that students will respond to; I will be consistent with consequences as well as rewards and benefits of the students acting as adults. By setting this expectation, it also means that I will stick to rules and consequences set for the class. It is said to be
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easier to get nicer throughout the year than to try and get stricter later in the year. I will keep my classes busy to prevent the amount of time the students will have to break away from the class and begin talking about other topics.

Some preventative measures I take are that I walk around the classroom as much as possible. While I want the classroom to be comfortable, walking around will remind students that I am actively involved in the class (including monitoring behaviors). If the class is too loud I will say out loud that they need to quiet down. A second warning includes the class to quiet down and a warning that they will be missing needed information if they do not do so. This is all of student responsibility in the class. Some students will respond to the teacher nicely asking them to stop talking. Other students will need to be reminded that after school detention can be assigned for disrupting class (that will especially affect those with after school sports, jobs, etc). All students are treated fairly, but not always worked with in the exact same way.

When a student is acting up, what I do depends on the current situation. If I am in a lecture or the students are doing single seatwork, then I walk up to the student and stand next to them or make eye contact with the student. I do it in a way that is non-confrontational, but letting the student know that their behavior is disruptive. If the students are in groups or labs, I walk up to the group and monitor what they are doing or ask if they need help. The discipline begins with non verbal signals to the student. Next is a verbal warning to the student that the behavior needs to stop. If these do not work, then a discipline strategy will have to be imposed, with no exceptions.

Guidance, Discipline Strategies, and Consequences

The seating arrangement of my room is three rows of ten desks each. This is
conducive to my room and class sizes. Students can be moved (with more able students, or away from other students) if a student is having troubles in the classroom.

For disruptive behavior I first stand next to the student or talk to student about the current subject or about their problematic behavior. Simply moving to their area of the room or standing nearby is often enough. When a students’ behavior is disruptive enough to take away from class time then the student will have time taken from them either after class, before or after school. It is natural consequences, taking time back from the student that was taken from our class time, the student will be able to relate with and accept responsibility for. Only when the student becomes extremely disruptive will the student be sent out of the room or to the office. My goal as a teacher is for the students to learn and that learning science does not occur in the principal’s office.

Sometimes there are students that cause problems too often, then there are different strategies to confront the situation. Sending a student to the office is a last ditch effort. If a student is misbehaving, the previous stated strategies will be imposed. When the behavior becomes constant, a conference with the student will be needed. Often when the student is a constant misbehaver there is a root of the problem. Conferencing with the student shows the student that I care enough to take time out of my day to see what is wrong. Also every time I deal with a student myself (rather than immediately contacting parents or administration), I’m reinforcing the ideas of responsibility and mutual respect in the classroom.

**Motivation**

One way I will focus on intrinsic motivation is by not letting the students think that their learning is all for the MAP testing, but for their furthering of knowledge. If the
students see that science is useful for life, then the students will see science not as just another class, but as interesting and useful information needed for life. By thinking of science as a part of us and our environment, it is really studying about yourself and your world. I think this will assist in student interest in the subject.

Praising students for good work, both in and out of class (ex. winning a sports game, getting a part in a play), good effort, or good work ethic will help students feel comfortable. Everyone is good at something and I want my students to know this and help them find (if they haven’t already) what they are both good at and enjoy.

Another way I believe students can be motivated is by making learning fun. Doing fun projects instead of always worksheets and tests is a way for students to embrace learning. Being able to relate the subject to the student’s real lives (out of school lives including sports, shopping, working, and the future) is another way to encourage the students to enjoy school. Creating a science or environmental club will encourage further growth and interest. Also, encouraging students to follow their dreams (whether they are in science or not) are more ways to motivate students. Sometimes students need to be reminded that their dreams are achievable. Also telling a student, or anyone, that you are proud of them works wonders.
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