

## Classroom Management

By Bob Roach Classroom management is one of the greatest concerns for any teacher. This is especially true when teaching Middle School. In the paragraphs that follow It is my greatest hope that I will empower you as a teacher with some powerful tools that will improve your classroom management. After all, teaching and learning really should, and can, be fun. The foundation of classroom management is the relationship that you develop between yourself and the student. After all it will ultimately be you that will determine what goes on in your classroom. Second only in importance, for good classroom management, is the relationship that you have with the parents of your students. The best way to develop a good relationship with students is to follow these three rules: 1) Treat your students with respect. 2) Respond to miss behavior quickly. 3) Be consistent with your expectations and consequences. As a teacher you must also develop a healthy relationship with the parents. You do not want parents to be on the defense. I suggest that you make sure that you contact each and every parent in the first month of school. It will not take you long to identify the students who have trouble making good decisions. Contact those parents in the first week or two of school. A positive phone call to all parents, just to let them know that their child is important to you, many times will get them on your side. This healthy relationship will prove to be especially helpful when you must make that second phone call and set up a conference to make a plan about their childs' behavior. Building a healthy relationship with both student and parent will greatly enhance your ability to have effective classroom management. Treating students with respect while responding quickly and consistently will also enhance your classroom management. But you must have a discipline plan in place prior to the start of school. No matter what your plan is it must have well thought out expectations and consequences. Remember, consequences should be planned for both positive and negative behavior. If you are teaching Middle School and following the Middle School concept, then you have a team of teachers. These teachers should get together and work out the specifics concerning the expectations and consequences for your individual school. While I would not try to make a conclusive list of helpful hints, concerning expectations and consequences, these are a few of the tools that I would suggest you include in your tool box for effective classroom management: 1. Group work or cooperative learning is a valuable model of teaching. When you use this model make sure that you have plenty of hands on activities to keep students full attention. 2. Be careful about letting Middle School children out to go to the restroom. Many times another student has set up an appointment to meet them at a certain time. I would tell that student to finish their work and if they still need to go in about ten minutes I will send them. 3. Your first line of preventative discipline is facial expressions, gestures, eye contact and physical proximity. Make sure that you use them prior to more extreme measures. As you enter a new year and look forward to having fun with your students, I wish you the best of luck. Keep in mind, as the school year progresses, that discipline is the art of teaching young people how to act. More importantly know that setting limits is easy... enforcing them is not. So take the time it takes to put a classroom management plan in effect that you will enforce quickly, consistently, and respectfully.

## About the Author

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