

Creative Classroom Management Network, April 6, 2018

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Learning objective: Participants will be able identify three techniques for improving efficiency in the classroom.

Assessment: reflection at the end

Many of these ideas came from Teach Like a Champion by Doug Lemov.

ENTRY ROUTINE

Starting on time: Students are more likely to come on time if you start the class on time. When the class time begins, close the door. Put a sticky on it saying “Class begins at ...”

Folder system: This cuts down on time spent passing out papers and ensures that absent students get the work they missed.

- Contains everything piece of paper they need for that class in order
- Also contains anything I am returning to them, such as corrected essays
- cuts down on passing paper time
- makes sure students who are absent get the papers they missed
- students who owe homework can put it in their folder for me to check

Do Now: have a review activity on the board or small handout that students who come early can work on. This should be something you will not have to explain in much detail. Five to ten minutes after class officially started, check answers. No clarifications for students who come in late.

The agenda is on board:

- Gives students an idea of what’s going to happen.
- Articulates learning goals for the class
- Of course you can deviate, but be clear about explaining why you are doing that.
- Check back during class to see how far we’ve come

CLASSROOM INTERACTION

Ground rules: What rules do we as a class agree on? What are the consequences for not obeying them?

Cold call method of calling on students:

Teach Like a Champion calls this the single most effective technique.

- Allows you to check for understanding effectively and systematically.

- Increases speed because there is no waiting for hands to go up.
- Keeps students on their toes because they never know when they will be called on. Because this is predictable, it encourages students to be prepared.
- Makes sure everyone is heard.
- Break a question into smaller parts so more students can participate.

No Opt Out:

- If a student can't answer, give her time, then ask if she needs help. Have another student help, but get the first student to repeat the correct answer.
- If it's more of an open-ended question that the student can't answer, say that you will give her time, but will come back for an answer.
- Participating is not optional. It is required.

Homework correction:

- I correct writing, but never correct grammar worksheets. Do that collectively.
- Walk around to note who did homework. Call only on students who did the homework. Call on students randomly.
- If the homework involves sentences, project them on the board so you don't have your back to the students during correction.

Tight Transitions: This is when you lose students to chatting. Having the paper in their folder helps with that. Opening textbooks. Say page, have it written on the agenda. If one student is lagging, start the activity.

Economy of language: especially in lower levels of ESOL, fewer words are better. Say what is important and only that. Rein in chattiness and save that for break.

Quiet power: Don't talk more loudly when you feel you are losing power. When you get louder, you make it easier for the students to get louder too. Rather drop your voice.

Do not talk over other noise.

Do not engage: Stay exactly on topic, do not get diverted.

The joy factor: find ways of injecting humor and fun

- Fun & games
- Special class culture: special nicknames, race for best attendance, inside jokes
- Drama, singing
- Suspense & surprise—put discussion things in envelopes instead of printing out a list
- Humor
- Props

Minimize the Drag Factor:

- Do not apologize for something that will be boring or challenging. Do not say, “Okay this is a little dull, but we have to do it.”
- Do not blame an outside force. “This is on the TABE test so even though it’s stupid, we have to do it.”
- Be positive: “This is not easy and I know you are going to learn it just fine because you are a focused and hardworking class.” “This is challenging and it’s the most important grammar of this level.” “This is tricky, but I’ve seen how much you can do when you focus.”

Exit ticket / wrap up and reflection: Think about your learning objectives for that class and ask a question or propose a task that can be an assessment. This could be a handout.