

Classroom Management Philosophy

The main principle that guides me when I think about teaching students is safety. All children should have a safe place in their life and for too many, school is the only place that even has a chance to be safe. School in general and the process of education is traumatic to many students, in this we are failing kids. I think that it is important as educators to change our expectations of students. I really like Universal Design of Learning (UDL) for this. One aspect of UDL is it gives students options. For example, in a social studies class, a student doesn't necessarily need to write a paper to show mastery of the content objective, so a teacher would give several different options as assessment. This might include a traditional paper but could also include an art component or a presentation. This helps learning to be more equitable.

A big part of creating safe spaces is making sure that our classrooms are diverse and equitable for all students. Part of this is challenging what we learned in school. For example, why is most required reading in schools written by white men? Books with the same theme and more diverse authors could be found and taught to our students. This can help show diverse perspectives in the classroom. In a social studies class, we could focus on voices that aren't heard very often. Integrating these perspectives means that students will learn their own history, the history of others, and hopefully walk away with a less euro-centric and white view of the world.

Classroom Management Plan

Daily Routine

What do you envision a daily class block or lesson to look like? Establishing a routine is vital to the comfort of your students. Will it look like this?

- Check-in
- Warm-Up
- Attendance
- Prior Knowledge
- New Knowledge
- Synthesizing Activity
- Closing

It is important to start class with a check-in. This time should be used to let students talk about whatever is on their minds. It doesn't have to take up a lot of time, but I think it is important to get a general feeling of how your students are doing. Sometimes this might mean changing your day's plan a little and that's okay. A warm-up activity doesn't always have to be content-related. A brain teaser or riddle could also be used. It is important to get students' brains working and ready to learn, and this can be done without content-related activities. After attendance, a couple of minutes will be spent reviewing. During this time students can ask any questions that they still have about prior knowledge. When

presenting new material I don't want to just lecture. That is the typical model for a social studies class and I think it's boring. Student involved and student-led activities are important to keep students engaged and engaged students are more likely to remember content material. This also goes into the synthesizing activity. These should be student-led and the products of them should be authentic. Activities should answer students should care about this activity. Closing is an important part of a class period. Students should be given enough time to put away their things and pack their bags. It is also a great time to remind students of any upcoming dates, like tests or homework. It can also be a time to preview what's going to happen in the next class.

Expectations

- #1. This classroom is a safe and inclusive community. Everyone in the community will work to keep it that way.
- #2. Ask questions.
- #3. Try your best.

Take some time to explain the what and why behind your expectations.

My first expectation is my most important. I want students to feel safe in my classroom, and I also think that it is important to build a classroom community. I think that this is like the be a respectful rule, but I wanted to change the language. In class, we can break down what this means. Go, in more detail, over how to be respectful of others' ideas and what inclusivity means, and how we can build a classroom that has inclusivity as a key component. My second expectation is to ask questions. Asking questions is an important part of learning. There is no such thing as a dumb question in the classroom. In school, I was often too shy to ask the questions that I had, and that hurt my learning. I want students to feel comfortable enough to ask the questions that they have. My third expectation is students should try their best. This is going to vary from student to student and from day to day. A student's best work might change due to factors in and outside of school. It is also my job as a teacher to help students do their best work and work to push their best even further.

Discipline

I employ discipline on a case-by-case approach. All of our students are not the same and therefore should not be disciplined the same way. I understand that some people might think that this is not fair, but it is equitable. I treat students differently because students need different things to be successful. I also try my best to keep discipline inside the classroom; this includes things like warnings, time-outs, loss of classroom privileges, and parent conferences. Students will be referred to the office in only the most extreme cases when this cannot be avoided.