Sara Al Hamarneh

Classroom Management

When you work in an environment that encourages you to become the best of who you are and to do the best in what you are called to do, then your being becomes inevitably purposeful in life. You will also allow yourself to grow while serving and empowering others.

My previous working environment was in a school with the following mission: **"We exist to provide excellent education in a loving, caring, and inclusive environment where everyone can grow holistically to make a positive impact in their community."** Working in an institution with such mission statement had helped me to become a better teacher, mother, and a person.

Teaching experience is constantly evolving; a good teacher never ceases to learn throughout his/her entire teaching career. Therefore, establishing a positive classroom environment and relationships in an elementary school is as necessary as establishing such environments and relationships in secondary schools.

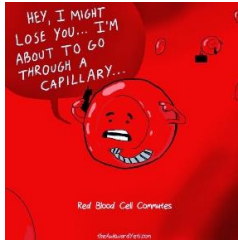Some **Major Classroom Techniques** that I had followed while being an educator:

- **Giving five minutes of exercise,** *or* five to eight minutes of meditation time before class-time, while using the power of music that plays in the background. These different exercises were enjoyable as a mental / physical and relaxing exercise for my students especially after returning from a physical education class.

- **Using the finger rule signals** to be excused to use the restroom, drink water outside class, answer a question, and to take a five-minute break during a lesson when they need it without having to interrupt the class time.

- **Using different methods to introduce the topic**: Using a variety of lesson starters such as a question, a picture that we discuss, an inquiry-based question, a thinking prompt or a

video. In some cases, I would ask the students to work in groups and prepare a poster so that they share it with the other groups. The co-teaching and learning methods help the students teach themselves and discover facts on their own under the teacher's guidance and supervision. I also used several strategies including: Think-Pair-Share, Venn Diagrams, Group projects inside and outside class, etc…
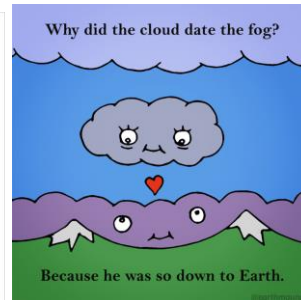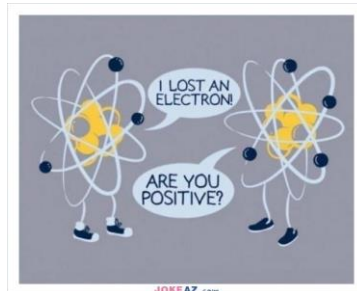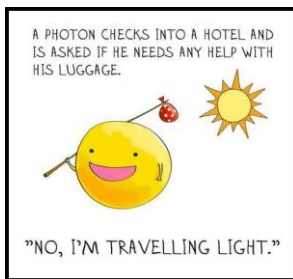
- The use of numerous **behavior-management strategies** and **attention grabbers**. A song, or a clap or imitation of the teacher ex (1,2,3 eyes on me …1,2 eyes on you/ Holy! Moly! ... Guacamole! / Class Class! …yes yes)

- **Having clear students' expectations** for each activity. Clear expectations not only help teachers but also help students and provides them with more control over their activities, behaviors, and responsibilities. A list of a seatwork activities prevents many behavioral issues that might arise in the classroom.

- **Present any new concept in small chunks of knowledge** to allow the students to cognitively interact and elaborate on each chunk. Students get overwhelmed by the influx of new information which will affect their attention and consequently their behavior in class. "*After each chunk, students in small groups interact by summarizing or answering a question about what was presented. Some teachers refer to is sequence as* **"chunk and chew"***"* (Marzano, R.J., 2011, p23).

- **Introduce humor in the classroom.** Humor changes the class' atmosphere to a more delightful and comfortable one. Teachers however should stay away from sarcasm as it can be offensive to some. This can be done through introducing videos, pictures, or self-directed humor.
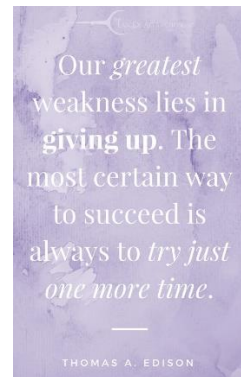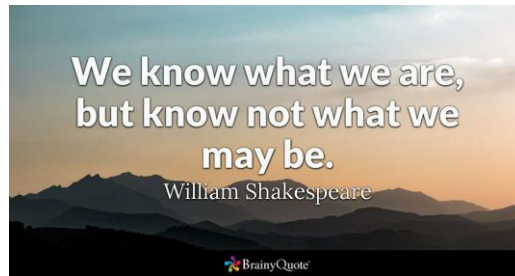
- **Demonstrating Intensity and Enthusiasm** by using verbal and non-verbal signals. Examples of non-verbal signals are smiling, changing the voice tone, body and hand gestures showing excitement, a pat on the shoulder or a nod.

- Using **differentiation** in presenting, teaching, and testing.

Some Major Considerations and Reminders to create a positive relationship, build motivation and cultivate positive mindset:

- **Using Games for vocabulary and review purposes**. Games changes the class' atmosphere to a more energetic one and brings enthusiasm while learning. Teachers can incorporate technology or physical movement with games.

- **Teach the best lesson on the first day.** This will leave a strong impression. It will also inspire and motivate the students to learn more about the subject. The students then will look forward to more lessons. This will create situational and individual interest with time. As John Clifford once mentioned "*Teach your best lesson the first day of school*" (Jacob Clifford, 2016, April).

- **Give choice to students**. The students are given the freedom to choose a topic of interest for a science-fair projects. They are also free to choose their method of presentation. They can present their project or subject in PowerPoint, a story, a model, a class game and in placing rewards for the classroom behavior.

- **Providing Examples and Teaching about Self-Efficacy.** Sharing motivational stories, videos, quotations to demonstrate efficacy and growth mindset then allowing time for discussions will help the students discover their own personal theories.

These above methods along with other techniques helped me considerably in creating a comfortable and enjoyable learning environment for my students.

Class Expectations, Requirements and Late Assignments Policy

Students are expected to:

1. Have Positive behaviors and attitudes toward each other.

2. Come to class on time and prepared to learn.

3. Bring all the materials needed in the class textbook, notebook, Chromebook, binder, and any assignments.

4. Always ask questions related to our topic and participate politely.

5. Keep your notebook and textbook in great condition. You will be assigned some work on your notebook so keeping it neat, clean, and organized with the date and topic labeled is a requirement.

6. Complete all homework and projects on time and to the best of your ability.

7. Study in advance! And come prepared! Short quizzes will be administered without formal notice. Be attentive for hints! 😊

Late assignments

Partial credit will be given depending on the student's effort and participation in class, and the number of days late.

Cheating and Plagiarism

- Copying from a website of text without a reference is considered cheating.

- Researching does not mean "cutting and pasting."

- If any student was caught cheating on a test, he/she will be subject to the school's cheating policy.

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Reference:

Jacob Clifford. (2016, April). *Student Engagement with Jacob Clifford. Retrieved from:*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DwzIS39WfKU&feature=youtu.be

Marzano, R.J. (2011). *The highly engaged classroom*. Indiana: Marzano Research Library