

NB
Nuts and Bolts Symposiums

The Never-Boring Conference for Educators



Making the Middle Matter-

Creating a Classroom Culture That
Supports Pre-Adolescent Learners

Website: www.debbiesilver.com
FB: www.facebook.com/drdebbiesilver
Twitter: @DrDebbieSilver


debbie silver
speaker • author • humorist



The Teacher

“Concerning a teacher’s influence, I have come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It’s my personal approach that creates the climate. It’s my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child’s life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or deescalated, and a child humanized or dehumanized.”

--Haim Ginott

Worries of a Middle School Student

- * Will I fit into this school?
- * Will I belong?
- * Will I get lost?
- * Am I different (this can be traumatic!)
- * Will I have to take a shower after gym?
- * Can I open my locker?
- * Why is my body changing?
- * Why is my body not changing?



Characteristics of Young Adolescents

Intellectual

- Moving from concrete to abstract
- Wide range of curiosity
- Prefer active over passive learning
- Prefer interaction with peers
- Prefer *real life* situations
- Preoccupied with self
- Challenge authority

Moral

- Desire to make the world a better place
- Show compassion
- Developing own personal judgments
- Rely on adults for advice
- Adjusting to shades of gray
- Participatory democracy

Physical

- Bodily change
- Girls mature more quickly than boys
- Fatigue and restlessness
- Need for physical activity
- Poor health habits – eating and daily care
- Lack of physical fitness

Emotional

- Mood swings
- Sudden outbursts
- Seeking independence
- Wanting peer acceptance
- Self-conscious
- Unique personal problems
- Concerned about social issues

Social

- Need to belong
- Lack social graces
- New slang or use of language
- Intimidated by large numbers in the building
- Desire for recognition
- Into fads
- Dislike embarrassment



20 Most Important Needs of Early Adolescents

Must Socialize	Must Have Frequent Physical Movement	Must Have Own Learning Styles	Must Cooperate	Must Be Safe
Must Express Emotions	Must Learn Decision-Making	Must Be Liked By Peers	Must Be Successful In Initial Tasks	Must Enjoy Good Health
Must Have Adult Role-Models	Must Eat Often	Must Have Routine	Must Argue	Must Develop Peer Relationships
Must Develop Self-Concept	Must Have Learning Experiences	Must Apply Problem-Solving Skills to Real Life	Must Understand Body Changes	Must Challenge Authority



There is a period of transition for youths 10- to 15-years-old. Freed from the dependency of childhood but not yet able to find their own paths to adulthood. Many young people feel a desperate sense of isolation. Surrounded only by their equally confused peers. Too many make poor decisions with harmful consequences. An effective middle school features a program that responds to the physical, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of the early adolescent.

Middle schoolers travel in herds and have one question to answer . . . “How can I impress my friends?”

What Can Teachers Do With Early Adolescent Behavior?



1. Remember, one of the earliest signs of the emerging early adolescent is forgetting. Why? Their minds are preoccupied with issues that are real and meaningful to them. Be creative when dealing with this trait.
2. Middle school kids are irritable! Hint: Do not argue with a middle schooler. The situation escalates, and you will lose. Know when to disengage.
3. Be willing to listen – but don't play 20 questions with every contact.
4. Avoid lecturing – keep it brief and non-threatening. Don't double team the child. Call for back-up only if you need it.
5. Deal only with the precise problem. Don't bring up other issues.
6. Keep your head. Don't let *their* moods ruin *your* day.
7. Give them appropriate power when possible. Negotiate more, listen more, command less.
8. Save your power for really important issues. Don't use power unless it is urgent. Give them a way out.
9. Work hard to help build their self-esteem.
10. Provide a safe haven for children.

Website: www.teachingkidstothrive.com

Twitter: @tchkids2thrive

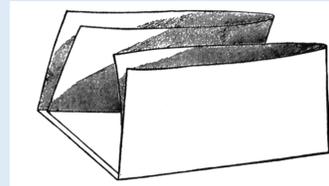


Ten Ways of Sharing Who You Are With Students

1. Make a bulletin board about you. Put pictures of you when you were their age and on through your school career.
2. Bring in pets and plants.
3. Have pictures of you, your family, your pets, and your friends framed and placed around the room.
4. Bring your scrapbook or old school yearbooks to class for students to view.
5. Weave relevant personal stories into appropriate teachable moments.
6. Participate in team building and/or advisory activities with students.
7. Stock a bookshelf with books you read at their age along with your personal favorites now.
8. Make a display or list of people you most admire.
9. Perform for them something you like to do such as a dance move, karate move, song, interpretative reading, magic, trick, physical feat, or joke.
10. Share with them your “dream list” of things you still want to do in this world before you leave it.
11. Other ideas?

Following Directions

1. On signal close your eyes and keep them closed until instructed to open them.
2. Follow the directions carefully, but ask no questions and make no comments.
3. If you find it hard to complete a task, just do the best you can.



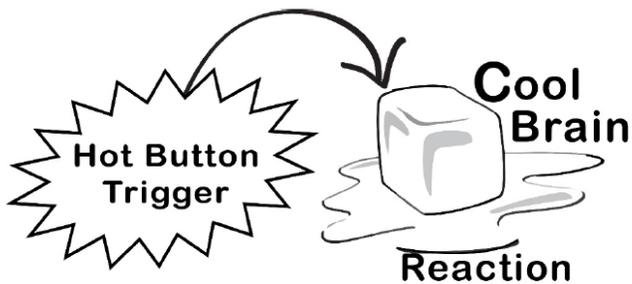
The power to choose

“Between stimulus and response there is a space.

In that space is our power to choose our response.

In our response lies our growth and our freedom.”

(Viktor Frankl, *Man's Search For Meaning*)



My If...Then Plan

What could happen to cause me to react?	If...	➔	Then	What can I do when it happens?
	If...	➔	Then	
	If...	➔	Then	

Retrieved from the companion website for *Teaching Kids to Thrive: Essential Skills for Success* by Debbie Silver and Dedra Stafford www.teachingkidstothrive.com. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, www.corwin.com. Copyright © 2017 by Corwin. All rights reserved. Reproduction authorized only for the local school site or nonprofit organization that has purchased this book.

So You Didn't Do Your Homework...

Date: _____ TB: _____

Name: _____ Assignment I missed: _____

Completing your homework is your responsibility as a student. Homework is purposefully assigned and created to help you gain knowledge in my class. Please help me understand what happened and how you will solve this issue so it does not happen in the future.

I do not have my homework today because: *(Please Check One)*

___ I did the assigned homework, but I did not bring it to class

___ I chose not to do my homework

___ I forgot to do my homework

___ I did not have the appropriate materials at home.

___ Other

Please explain in 3 sentences or more why you didn't have your homework today in class:

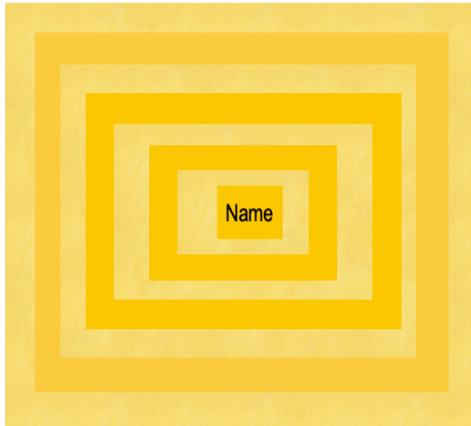
Please explain (in complete sentences) how you are going to solve this issue so it does not happen again:

I will bring this assignment in by the next class day because I want to succeed in this class.

Student Signature

What I See In You

About You:



Put a person's name in the center square. Fill in the spaces around her/his name with words that describe the strengths you see in her/him. Place the most important attributes in the spaces closest to the center. You can use Choose words from the Strength Word List or use your own.

©Debbie Silver, 2002

STRENGTH WORD LIST

strong	fair-minded	determined	thrifty
considerate	respected	planner	unselfish
fulfilled	flexible	efficient	self-aware
manager	likes new ideas	cooperative	self-directed
open-minded	forceful	dependable	adjusted
talented	predictable	comforting	inquiring
witty	intelligent	sociable	practical
systematic	encouraging	serious	unique
trustworthy	imaginative	adaptable	precise
foresight	pursuing	forgiving	listener
empathetic	compassionate	visionary	humorous
cheerful	motivating	artistic	athletic
energetic	disciplined	sharing	caring
daring	risk taker	courageous	patient
coordinated	loyal	fun loving	perceptive

SPIRITUAL STRENGTHS
MENTAL STRENGTHS

PHYSICAL STRENGTHS
EMOTIONAL STRENGTHS

Effective Feedback



Teaches that failure is how we learn.

Is always given to help the learner get better.
It does not excuse nor rationalize.

Focuses on what the learner can control
(choices, effort, strategies, resilience,
determination, etc.)

Is given in a calm, patient manner.

FOR THE TEACHERS FOR THE KIDS FOR THE FUTURE

Five benefits of Retrieval Practice

1. It's a powerful strategy to support learning.



2. It can identify gaps in knowledge.



3. Can lead to better organisation & transfer of knowledge.



4. Retrieval review is valuable for the student, teacher & parents.



5. Regular retrieval practice encourages students to study & self-test more.



Three Stages of Planning for a Differentiated Lesson

(from Differentiation from Planning to Practice Grades 6 -12, 2007. Rick Wormeli)

BEFORE PROVIDING THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE:

1. Identify your essential understandings, questions, benchmarks, objectives, skills, standards, and/or learner outcomes.
2. Identify those students who have special needs, and start thinking about how you will adapt your instruction to ensure they can learn and achieve.
3. Design formative and summative assessments.
4. Design and deliver pre-assessments based on summative assessments and identified objectives.
5. Adjust assessments and objectives based on further thinking while designing assessments.



WHILE DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE LEARNING DESIGN:

1. Design the learning experience for students based on the information gathered from those pre-assessments; your knowledge of your students; and your expertise with the curriculum; cognitive theory; and students at this stage of human development.
2. Run a mental tape of each step in the lesson sequence to make sure that the process makes sense for you diverse group of students and will help the lesson run smoothly.
3. Review your plans with a colleague.
4. Obtain/create materials needed for the lesson.
5. Conduct the lesson.
6. Adjust formative and summative assessments and objectives as necessary based on observation and data collected while teaching the lesson.



AFTER PROVIDING THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE:

1. With students, evaluate the lesson's success. What evidence do you have that students grasped the important concept and skills? What worked and what didn't, and why?
2. Record advice about possible changes to make when you repeat this lesson in future years

Steps to Take AFTER Providing the Learning Experience

from Rick Wormeli's D.I. book (p. 62)

What worked, and what didn't?

If something worked, how do I know? What evidence do I have that my students learned the content and skills I intended to convey?

If the lesson didn't work, what will I need to change the next time I teach? And what will I need to do with my students tomorrow to help them achieve?

Did I meet the varied learning needs of my students? If so, how?

What surprised me?

What do I do now know that I wish I had known before I started this lesson (or unit)?
What advice would I give a colleague who might use these materials in the future?

Which students will need help to learn essential skills?

Did the sequence of the lesson work? If not, how would I rearrange it?

How would a highly accomplished teacher improve this lesson?

Roses

"When we plant a rose seed in the earth, we notice that it is small, but we do not criticize it as 'rootless and stemless.'

We treat it as a seed,
giving it the water and nourishment required of a seed.
When it first shoots up out of the earth, we do not condemn it as
immature and underdeveloped;
nor do we criticize the buds
for not being open when they appear.

We stand in wonder at
the process taking place
and give the plant the care it needs at each stage of its
development.

The rose is a rose from the time
it is a seed to the time it dies.
Within it, at all times,
it contains its whole potential.
It seems to be constantly in the
process of change;
yet at each state, at each moment,
it is perfectly all right as it is."

--Timothy Gallaway

LIST OF RELATED CITATIONS
Making the Middle Matter- Creating A Classroom Culture That Supports Pre-Adolescent Learners

PRESENTED BY DEBBIE SILVER

Baenen, J. (2005). *H.E.L.P. How to Enjoy Living with a Preadolescent*. Westerville, OH: NMSA. <www.nmsastore.com>

Baenen, J. (2005). *More H.E.L.P. How to Enjoy Living with a Preadolescent*. Westerville, OH: NMSA <www.nmsastore.com>

Baenen, J. and Berckemeyer, J. (2005). *H.E.L.P. for Teachers*. Westerville, OH: NMSA.<www.nmsastore.com>

Berckemeyer, J. (2009). *Managing the Madness*. Westerville, OH: NMSA. <www.amlestore.com>

Berckemeyer, J. and Kinney, P. (2005). *The What, Why, and How of Student-Led Conferences*. Westerville, OH: NMSA.

Covey, S.R. (1989). *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Hunt,-Ullock, K., Selby, M., Silver, D., Thompson, R. & Wormeli, R. (2007). *Middle School Matters*. Nashville, TN: Incentive Publications.

Silver, D. (2012). *Drumming to the Beat of Different Marchers: Finding the Rhythm for Teaching Differentiated Learners (rev)*. Chicago, IL: World Book.

Silver, D. (2021). *Fall Down 7 Times, Get Up 8: Raising and Teaching Self-Motivated Learners* . Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Wormeli, R. (2007). *Differentiation: From Planning to Practice, Grades 6-12*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publications.

Check out: Association of Middle Level Educators (AMLE).
www.amle.org