

Teaching Expectations

One day when I was teaching high school, a school administrator was observing my teaching. In the middle of giving instructions for the next activity, a student yelled out something completely inappropriate. I stood at the front of the classroom in shock, I tried to think of how to handle the situation but my mind was blank. I then heard the other students turn to the student and they said, *"You owe her all of your tickets, come on pay up, dude. That's not cool to do in our class."*

As motivators and drink/restroom passes for the students, I handed out tickets when students were participating. I set the expectation that when I heard any inappropriate language in my class that particular student had to turn in all of his/her tickets.

Later when I was talking to the administrator who was observing me, he was so impressed that I had set up a classroom where the students were managing themselves. Being clear on your expectations and setting them early in the day will help you when managing the students in each classroom you enter.

Teaching expectations is a simple, but very effective way to help students manage themselves. By being clear in setting your expectations, when a student is not performing to those expectations, you can ask her what is expected of her.

For example:

Teacher: *"I see you have your cell phone out, what is the expectation when it comes to cell phones?"*

Most likely you are going to get a sarcastic response, but this won't throw you off. You turn to another student and ask the same question.

Teacher: *"What is the expectation when it comes to cell phones?"*

Since the students see you are serious and won't be drawn off task, they will answer the question appropriately. Then when you see a student put her cell phones away, you will reinforce her appropriate behavior.

The end of the school year is crazy and students and teachers alike have a hard time staying on task. Keep students, and yourself, on task by setting your expectations clearly *at the beginning of class.*