

SUBstantial News

November 2007

With support from the Substitute Teaching Institute at Utah State University.

News and Information Just for Substitute Teachers from

Federal Way Public Schools

Managing Transitions

Making smooth and efficient transitions from one activity to the next is sometimes a challenging but very critical aspect of classroom management. Poor transitions waste time and present opportunities for inappropriate behavior to begin.

Whether you are switching from one assignment to another, getting ready for lunch, starting a group project, or wrapping up class at the end of the day, students of all ages need to know what is expected of them. Specifically they need to know five things before you as a teacher can expect them to make successful and timely transitions.

1. When and how to stop their current activity.
2. What to do with the materials they are currently using.
3. What new materials they will need.
4. What to do with their new materials.
5. How much time they have to make the transition

Example: "It is almost time to go to the computer lab. Please stop working, close your science book with your worksheet inside to mark your place and leave it on the corner of your desk. Pick up a copy of this week's spelling list from the front table and line up at the door with the list in your hand. I expect everyone to be lined up and ready to leave for the lab in four minutes. Go

ahead and begin getting ready now."

When working with young students or if the transition involves a number of steps, it is often beneficial to ask questions about and have students re-state the steps before beginning the transition. A couple minutes of questioning students and clarifying expectations will save a lot of time and confusion during the actual transition process.

Additional classroom management strategies can be found in the Substitute Teacher Handbooks and Classroom Management audio CD. Both are available online at www.sti.usu.edu or by calling 800-922-4693.

Riddles for All

Riddles, mind benders, brain teasers and word puzzles are all critical thinking activities that can be used to fill extra time in any classroom. Whether you hand out a worksheet, write a riddle on the board, or read a mind bender from a book, you can engage student minds in activities that are both fun and mentally challenging. Here are a few to share with students the next time you are in the classroom.

- What gets wetter and wetter the more it dries? (a towel)
- What can you catch but not throw? (a cold)
- What five letter word becomes shorter

when you add two letters to it? (short)

- If March = 43 and May = 39, then by the same logic what does July equal? (July = 68, each letter is replaced by the number of its position in the English alphabet then the numbers are added together)

- A 1-6 number cube is sitting on a table. Students count 17 dots on the sides they can see. Which face of the cube is resting on the table? (the side with four dots, 21 total dots - 17 visible dots = 4 hidden dots)

Additional ideas can be found in Chapter 6 of the Substitute Teacher Handbook, in books such as Brain

Teasers!: Over 180 Quick Activities and Worksheets That Make Kids Think by Susan S. Petreshene, and on the Web. At the Internet 4 Classrooms website (www.internet4classrooms.com/brain_teachers.htm) you will find direct links to over 20 different sites that post critical thinking ideas appropriate for classroom use.

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Quote of the Month

"Teaching kids to count is fine, but teaching them what counts is best."

—Bob Talbert



Emotional Disorders

Everybody has a bad day once in a while when emotions are running high and maintaining control of what we say and do is difficult. For some students with emotional disorders this is what they experience everyday. These students may display a wide range of inappropriate behaviors including aggression, violence, verbal threats, destruction of property, compulsiveness, impulsiveness, irritability, hyperactivity, tantrums,

and/or withdrawal. They may appear to have poor memory, a short attention span, a poor self image, and seem unable to control their behavior.

While teaching students with emotional disorders can be a challenge, it can also be very rewarding. When you have such students in your classroom, there are several helpful guidelines to keep in mind. First, it is extremely important

you remain calm and in control of your own emotions. Regardless of the student behavior you need to respond calmly, rationally, and professionally. Whenever possible, focus on the positive and praise students for their success in both academic tasks and displaying appropriate behavior. Make expectations small and achievable. Maintain trust by making eye contact, talking in a straightforward way, and listening carefully.

Things you need to know!

WINTER SUBSTITUTE CELEBRATION

Our Substitute Celebration will be on January 31, 2008. This is a great opportunity to celebrate your success and network with other substitutes in our district. Please mark your calendar and plan to join us in honoring our outstanding substitute colleagues. We'll provide plenty of refreshments and door prizes. We look forward to seeing you there:

What: Winter Substitute Celebration

Where: ESC Board Room

When: January 31, 2008

Time: 4:15-5:30

RSVP to CJ at 253-945-2027 by January 15, 2007 to let her know you are attending.

CLASS OPPORTUNITIES - Please remember to check out training opportunities available through the Continuous Learning Center at www.peopleware.net.

"I'm going to do it and you can't stop me!" What is your proactive response to a 15 year-old ?

Classroom management can begin outside the classroom, and now there's a free online parenting course to help you practice the skills you need. The principles are universal and timeless.

Utah State University's OpenCourseWare is offering a noncredit course based on The Power of Positive Parenting, a textbook written by the same man who wrote the chapter on Classroom Management in the *Substitute Teacher Handbook*.

Go to: <http://ocw.usu.edu>

On the left-hand column, click on "Family, Consumer, & Human Development" Click on "Power of Positive Parenting, Fall 2006" Highlight and click on the topic of your choice.

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