

SUBstantial

News



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News and Information Just for Substitute Teachers from

Communicating Expectations

The old saying, “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” is certainly true when it comes to classroom management. Preventing inappropriate behavior from occurring is much more desirable than having to enforce consequences after an incident. Communicating expectations for student behavior is perhaps the most effective, yet often overlooked, means of preventing inappropriate behavior.

Students cannot be expected to know how to behave during a reading assignment, test, group project, class discussion, science activity, walk down the hall, an assembly or lining up for lunch unless they have received specific instructions regarding their behavior. At the beginning of each new activity, instruct students about the behavior you expect.

To be effective, expectations should be concise, specific, and operational. Use proactive phrases that instruct students what they should be doing, rather than reciting a detailed list of “don’ts.” Tell students where they are expected to be, what to do with the materials they have, the kind of interaction to have with other class members, and what to do when they finish.

For example, you could say, “As you work on this math assignment, remain in your own seat. You may use a calculator and work with the other students in your group if you wish. If you finish before class is over, please remain seated and either read or silently work on something at your desk. You will hand in your completed assignment tomorrow at the beginning of class.”

It is also important to check for student understanding once expectations have been taught. Have students demonstrate their understanding by answering questions about or role-playing the behaviors you have explained. An extra minute or two explaining, demonstrating, questioning, and even role-playing is well worth the time saved and frustration avoided as students can then be held accountable to the level of behavior that is expected.

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

Greeting Card Activities

Looking for a quick and timely fill-in activity? Have students make a greeting card for a February holiday or observance. We all know that this is the month for Valentine’s Day, Presidents Day, and Black History Awareness but did you also know it is Sweet Potato Month, National Pancake Week (22nd –28th), and Bubble Gum Day on the 6th? The following are just a few February observances that could be used as greeting card themes:

Month Long Observances

Library Lovers Month
National Bird Feeding Month
Return Shopping Carts to the Supermarket Month
National Laugh-Friendly Month

Weekly Observances

Children’s Authors & Illustrator’s Week (1-7)
Jell-O Week (8-14)
Random Acts of Kindness Week (11-17)
American Crossword Puzzle Week (27-3/1)

Daily Observances

Wear Red Day (6)
Read in the Bathtub Day (9)
My Way Day (17)
National Tooth Fairy Day (28)

For a complete list of the funny, the quirky, and the “I can’t believe there is such a thing” February observances go to <http://www.brownielocks.com/february.html>.

Quote of the Month

“I can’t change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination.”

– Jimmy Dean



Staying Healthy

Cold and flu season are upon us again and schools are the perfect breeding ground for those nasty little bacteria and viruses that can make us feel miserable. Substitute teachers are especially at-risk for getting sick because of the vast number and varied students they may come in contact with during any given week. Remembering to do the following will help keep you out of the sickbed and ready to work in the classroom:

- **Get Plenty of Rest.** Now is not the time to be staying up to watch the Late, Late, Late Show.
- **Stay Hydrated.** Take a water bottle with you to teaching assignments and try to have it empty by lunch or the end of the day.
- **Wash Your Hands.** Wash your hands every chance you get and add a bottle of hand sanitizer to your SubPack for

those times when soap and water are out of reach.

- **Exercise.** Even little things like parking at the far end of the lot or making a couple extra trips to the office, media center, or teachers lounge during the day will help relieve stress and boost your immune system.

Things you need to know!