

Being Proactive & Punctual

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Two characteristics are frequently cited by students when they are asked to describe their best teachers. These are punctuality and a sense of being proactive. It stands to reason that being on time and anticipating future situations can contribute to success in the classroom.

Being Proactive

Proactive behavior means taking the initiative, planning, and being well prepared for teaching and other classroom occurrences.

Initiative. Perhaps you have seen students make a presentation known as a living painting. A living painting is a tableau that explores a work of art. Chances are that an art teacher volunteered to create, direct, and present the tableau. Or perhaps you have seen an exemplary student art exhibition. There is little doubt that an art teacher was behind the art show. These are examples of taking the initiative.

To take the initiative means seizing upon opportunities to advocate the power of the visual arts in the curriculum. These opportunities can be small teacher-to-teacher exchanges, larger whole-school projects, or extremely large community-wide events. Keep your eyes and ears open for any opportunity to showcase your students and your program.

Planning. As a student teacher it is likely that you are all too familiar with lesson planning; however, planning for quality art experiences goes much further than individual lessons, units of study, or scope and sequence. Planning for the classroom includes day-to-day (if not minute-by-minute) classroom management. You probably have a sense of learning outcomes for any given lesson, but do you know how

to respond to difficult questions or address discipline problems that might occur? For example, how will you explain geometric shapes to young learners or extinguish inappropriate use of materials by older students?

Preparation. In addition to knowing the content of a lesson, having all the materials, tools, and resources at hand and ready to use constitutes preparedness to teach. The best way to achieve this state of preparation is to arrange and make accessible everything each class will need for any given day. Be sure that instructions for all lessons are posted for ready reference.

Being Punctual

As a student teacher it is your responsibility to model classroom etiquette. Punctuality is a cornerstone of educational professionalism. Punctuality means that you are always on time.

Arrive on time at the campus. Give yourself ample minutes to prepare for classes. In most cases this means arriving much earlier than the actual school day begins. Most educators find that getting to school before the students arrive sets a more relaxed tone for the day.

Start class on time. Begin purposeful instruction at the appointed minute. Have a set format so that students know what to do as soon as they enter the room. An art warm-up activity such as sketchbook or writing for the first minutes of each



Having appropriate resources and activities on hand is an indicator of a proactive and punctual professional educator.

class will encourage students to be on task and to use each moment of art to its fullest. Consider taking role after students are busy with their work.

End class on time. Don't spend your time watching the clock. Use a kitchen timer or assign a student to be the time keeper. Allow ample time for clean up. Use the final moments of class for review and reflection of material covered in the lesson. Include a meaningful close that sums up learning.

In Summation

To be proactive and punctual suggests to students, faculty, and administrators that you respect them and their time. These key behaviors help to define an orderly and well-managed classroom. ☺

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