#  <br> <br> for Common Classroom Problems 

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# RickMorris \#5Things 

Hosted by Alison Scranton and Cheryl Lane<br>Teachers, Coaches, and Creators of Classroom Couture

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## Creating a New Classroom Culture

Email: RickMgmt@gmail.com
If we expect students to thrive in a Common Core classroom, we're going to need to upgrade the culture within that room. As opposed to the obedience-based model that's been used for years upon years, I recommend we create a new one.

A good start would be to promote the following four character traits:

Self-determination
Conceptual thinking
Creativity
Productivity
And from what I've been able to discover, these critical traits are best acquired by students when there is a bit of freedom in the classroom.

With that in mind, here are three simple strategies that will promote the development of a classroom culture that values freedom, self-control, and independence.

## Caining Attention to Start

the day, the period, the lesson

1. Don't use your _ voice
2. Pick a spot in the room, pose, and wait.
3. Maybe use a countdown timer.

## The Freedom List

Freedom is one of the five basic student needs identified by William Glasser. This simple strategy will enable you to extend freedom to your students so that they can develop self-control.

Read: Setting Limits in the Classroom by Robert MacKenzie. [half.com for a great price]
Every school year, around week four or so, I'd offer my students the freedom to work away from their assigned desks. They had already gained enough insight into how our classroom operated that they understood I expected them to exhibit self-control. The new freedom was introduced to raise the bar a bit higher.

Where the students decided to work was up to them. It may have been a large table that was normally used for group work or the empty seat of an absent student. Maybe it was a spot on the carpet or a wall they would lean against. Whatever. All we asked was that the move helped the student be productive.

Note: Anyone working on the carpet or leaning against a wall was encouraged to use a clipboard to keep their writing legible.

A roster of names was created and pinned to a bulletin board or taped to one of the walls in some convenient place. Anyone who moved but got off task was returned to his regular seat. A line was then drawn through the student's name on list. A line through your name meant you were confined to your desk for the remainder of the week.

On Monday, a new roster was posted so that everyone was given a fresh start.

| Work Away |
| :---: |
| Week of: October 21 |
| Aliya |
| Alric |
| Briann |
| Calur |
| CJ |
| Jack |
| Kara |
| Katie |
| Keit |
| Kevin |
| Lauren |
| Marwa |
| AAt |
| Aurim |
| Peter |
| Samana |
| Shane |
| Waleed |

# Classroom Gestures <br> (From the book, Tools \& Toys: Fifty Fun Ways to Love Your Class) 



# Safe Engagement <br> (Excerpted from Eight Great Ideas: Simple Ways to Transform Your Teaching) 

It took me about fifteen years of teaching before I began to realize that I was doing most of the talking during lessons and discussions. (Research indicates that the teacher's voice accounts for $80 \%$ of the words being spoken.)

Furthermore, when I pondered the fact that a lot of my words were nothing more than a repetition of what a student had just said-a traditional behavior known as echoing-I decided to try something new.

## The benefits of not echoing

- a significant reduction in how much talking you normally do
- no need to validate everything being said by the students
- increased levels of meta-cognition for students
- increased levels offormative assessment for teachers


## The challenge of not echoing

- it takes time to recondition yourself
- you'll need to ensure that students are listening to each other
- deal with the soft speakers [See suggestions below.]


## Formative Assessment Booster



## What About the Soft Speakers?

## Ask Students to Say Echo

Student A responds to being called upon by sharing a thought. Student B, sitting across the room, didn't hear what was just said. Student B says, "Echo" loud enough for Student A to hear. Student A, upon hearing the word echo, repeats the thought. Result? Better speaking skills. Better listening skills.

## Prepare for Overuse



Let the novelty wear off.
Allow students time to become comfortable with the power of saying echo.
Counsel the abusers privately. [Core Principle \#4: You can focus your attention.]

## Make it Manageable [Core Principle \#5]

Limit initial use of the strategy to a specific time or interaction. For example, allowing students to use the "Say Echo" strategy only during journal sharing might help to make the trial run a bit smoother and more successfully. As students gain experience, remove the restrictions. In a month or so, the whole thing willl be automatic. And what a difference it will make.

## Timers

(From the book, New Management Handbook: Creating a Happier, More Productive Classroom)

I used a variety of timers-some digital, some ana-log-to keep track of activities and independent work so that I didn't have to worry about things running too long. The problem with an activity running longer than you had said it would is that your students will begin to ignore your stated deadlines. Not good.


## My Current Favorite (shown in actual size)

1. Counts up or down.
2. Resets automatically to the previously set time.
3. The beep is loud enough to be heard by students.
4. Time remaining can be seen from twenty feet away.

## My First Timer

1. Better than the clock on the wall.
2. Difficult to set for less than five minutes.
3. The one-time ding sound was hard to hear.

## Sound Makers

(From the book, New Management Handbook: Creating a Happier, More Productive Classroom)
In certain situations, using a sound maker to communicate with your students can be much more effective than your voice. This is especially true when your students are working on an activity and their left-brains are occupied. ${ }^{\dagger}$ Sound makers are right-brain signals that will send an easy-to-hear, easy-to-understand message.

I start the year with just two sound makers.


Call bell

1. Send a student from your team to request materials.
2. Student returns to team and disseminates.
3. Materials are put down and attention is given to Mr. Morris.

clicker or squeak toy Your attention, please.

[^0]
# Using Music for Student Independence <br> (From the book, Eight Great Ideas: Simple Ways to Transform Your Teaching) 

Although I've found that a sound maker—such as a dog squeak toy-can be extremely effective in sending a non-verbal message to students, using a song ${ }^{\dagger}$ actually takes the concept to an entirely different level.

Basically, a song can be used to: 1) initiate a procedure or routine,
2) time a transition, or
3) remind your students about something.

The list of songs below can be found on the CD of TV theme songs that comes with the book, Eight Great Ideas.

1. N-B-C (0:03)

Reminder: don't forget to write your name, number, and date on your paper.
2. Jeopardy ( $1: 03$ )

Transition: getting ready for a new activity.

## 3. Andy Griffith (0:13)

Procedure: return to your seat.
Transition: wrap up your partner/group discussion and come to attention.
4. Bill Nye, the Science Guy (0:29)

Procedure: come to the carpet.
5. Mission Impossible (0:49)

Procedure: end-of-the-day pack-up.
6. Cagney \& Lacy ( $0: 25$ )

Transition: get ready for BELLWORK.

## 7 Card Sharks (0:55)

Procedure: clean-up routine.
8. Password (0:56)

Procedure: discussion timer.
9. Dating Game (0:49)

Procedure: students will be randomly partnered with another student.
10. Bonanza (0:52)
11. The Price is Right ( $\mathbf{1 : 0 3}$ )
12. Sponge Bob Squarepants (0:40)

13-18. Test Timers: 60- and 90-seconds; 2 min.; 3 min; 4 min.; 5 min.
$\dagger$ My favorite site for classroom music is FreePlayMusic.com. A great place to find all kinds of theme songs is TelevisionTunes.com.
(Excerpted from Class Cards: How to Put Your Students in the Palm of Your Hand.)

## Level 1

When you begin to use a set of Class Cards with your students, it will be important to patiently teach and reinforce the concept of having an answer or opinion ready. You will need to state this expectation quite clearly and then be prepared to encourage and nurture its development.

Your expectations can be stated in many ways.

> "Have an answer ready, please."
"Don't wait for me to call your name before you begin to think."

## Levell 2

Once your students have become comfortable with the idea ofbeing called upon randomly-which may require more time than you would have thought-you'll be able to take Class Cards to the next level: recording the quality of their responses on their cards with a pencil. Keeping a record of responses will enable you to hold your students more accountable during lessons and discussions.

Safety: Since responses are now being scored, you might want to allow your students the option of asking for more time. When someone does make this request, merely set the card aside so that you'll remember to get back to him after a couple of other students have been called upon.


## Level 3

With the Class Cards app-compatible with an iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad, and Android phones-you'll be able to kick things up a notch.

This app, which can be purchased from the Apple app store or Google Play for $\$ 4.99$, will do it all.

1. Generates a randomized list of students to call upon.
2. Provides you with a preview of the next four students.
3. Allows you to place a student in the holding area-gray boxesfor more time. A tap on the name sends it the holding area; a second tap returns it to the top.
4. Displays scores in the app or on-line if you've archived them to our secure server. (Archived scores can be viewed, printed, and even downloaded as Excel spreadsheets.)


## The Secret to New Management

Assign each student in your class a number to use for identification. That's it.

Twenty-two kindergarteners? Number them from 1 to 22. Twenty-nine fifth graders? Number them from 1 to 29. Thirty-eight seniors in your fourth period math class? You guessed it. Number 'em.

Although the number concept may seem impersonal at first glance, experience has shown that this is not the case. Teachers never think of their students as numbers. They make sure that all of their interactions are named-based. However, the use of students numbers will enable you and your students to take care of class business like never before.

Note: If you currently team-teach or redeploy some of your students, start by numbering just your core group. You'll be able to expand the system to include other students with just a bit of practice and experience.

Using student numbers will prove to be the single most powerful step you can take toward effective student management and classroom organization.

## Simple Ways Numbers Help

Inventory Control
> number the books students will be given to keep track of them
> number rulers, scissors, crayon boxes
Disaster Drills/Field Trips
> have students line up in numerical order to verify that everyone is present and accounted for

Grade Keeping
> recording grades will be a simpler process because your stack of assignments will match the order of your grade book

## Numbering Your Students

Alphabetical Order
> based on first name (makes it easier to remember names and numbers)
> based on last name

## Random Order

> write numbers on pieces of paper; put papers in separate film canisters; have students select a canister
> maybe offer students an opportunity to switch numbers after selecting

## Student Choice

> allow them to choose their own

## Take Your Time

As you and your students adjust to the number system, think about making some number-based tools and toys. You'll find some suggestions on my website. You'll also find a bunch of them in the book, Tools \& Toys.

Bonus: Anything you make that is based upon numbers will be good every year. That's a nice thought.

> Magnetic Tiles (website) Collating Folders (Tools \& Toys) Pick-A-Student (website)

## Student Numbers att the Secondary Level

Although it may seem a bit overwhelming to contemplate numbering five or six different groups of students, it's actually easier to do than you may think. The keys? Colors and 3-digit numbers.


If you are lucky enough to be in the same room throughout the day, make computer-generated class charts on letter-sized paper. These could be posted on a single bulletin board. If you decide to color-code the periods, frame each roster with colored construction paper.

| Period 1 |  | Period 2 |  | Period 3 |  | Period 4 |  | Period 5 |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| ${ }_{10101} 10$ Fist Last | ${ }^{121}$ First Last | 201 First Last | 221 First Last | 301 First Last | 321 first Last | 401 First Last | 421 First Last | 501 First Last | 521 First last |
| 102 First Last | 122 First Last | 202 First Last | 2225 Fist last | 302 First Last | 322 First Last | 402 Fisst last | 422 First last | ${ }_{5027} 5$ Fist last | 522 First Last |
| ${ }^{103 \text { First } \text { Last }} 104$ fist last | 123 First last | ${ }_{20}^{2034} \mathbf{2 0 4}$ First LLast | ${ }_{2} 223$ Firstist Last | ${ }_{304}^{303}{ }_{\text {F First L Last }}$ | ${ }^{323}$ First last | ${ }_{403}^{403}$ Firist Last Last | 423 First last | 503 Frist Last 504 Fistl ast | ${ }_{5}^{523 \text { Firstl } \text { Lst }}$ |
| 105 First Last | ${ }_{125}^{124 \text { first last }}$ | 205 First Last | 225 fist Last | 305 first last | 325 first last | 405 first last |  | 505 First Last | 525 First last |
| 106 First Last | 126 Frist Last | 206 First Last | 2266 Fist last | 306 first Last | 326 first Last | 406 First Last | 426 First Last | ${ }^{5066}$ Fist Last | 526 First Last |
| 107 first | ${ }^{127}$ First Last | 207 First Last | ${ }_{2}^{227}$ first Last | 307 First last | ${ }_{32727 \text { first last }}^{3 \text { ast }}$ | ${ }_{4}^{407}$ first last | ${ }_{4}^{427}$ First last | ${ }_{5}^{507 \text { first Last }}$ | ${ }_{52}^{527}$ Firsti last |
| 108 first last 109 firt last | ${ }^{128}$ Firist Last | ${ }_{209}^{208 F i r i s t ~ L a s t ~}$ | 228 first last 229 Fist ast | 308 first Last 309 Fist last | ${ }_{32989 \text { first }}^{3}$ ast | 408First Last 409 Fist last | ${ }_{42989 \text { First Last }}^{4}$ | 508First last 509 Frist Last | ${ }_{529}^{528 \text { First L List tast }}$ |
| 110 First last | 130 First last | 210 First Last | 230 Fist last | 310 First Last | 330 firstlast | 410 First Last | 433 First last | 510 Fisst last | 530 First Last |
| 111 First Last | ${ }^{131}$ First Last | 211 First last | ${ }^{231}$ First Last | 311 First ast | ${ }^{3121}$ First 2st | 4117 First ast | ${ }^{431}$ 43First ast | 511 First last | ${ }_{5}^{533}$ First last |
| 112 First Last 113 First Last | 132 Frist last 133 F Fist last | ${ }_{213}^{212}$ Frist Fist Last | ${ }_{233}^{232 \text { First last }}$ | 312 First Last 313 Firstast |  | ${ }_{412}^{412}$ First Last | ${ }_{4}^{432} \times 2$ First Isst | $\underset{513}{512 \text { First last }}$ | ${ }_{533}^{532 \text { First L List Last }}$ |
| ${ }_{114}^{114.4 i r i s t ~ L a s t ~}$ | ${ }_{1} 134$ First Last | ${ }_{214} 214$ first Last | ${ }_{2} 234$ first last | 314 first Last | 334 first Last | 414 first last | 434 first last | 514 fist last | 534 First Last |
| 115 First Last | ${ }^{135}$ First Last | 215 first Last | 235 First Last | 315 First ast | 3355 first Last | 415 First last | 4355 first last | ${ }_{515} 515$ fist last | ${ }_{5}^{535}$ First last |
| ${ }_{117}^{116 ~ F i r s t ~ L ~ L i s t ~ L a s t ~}$ | ${ }^{136}$ Firist Lest | ${ }_{217}^{216 \text { First List Last }}$ | ${ }_{235}^{236 \text { First last }}$ | ${ }_{317}^{316}$ Firist List Last |  | ${ }_{417}^{416 \text { Firsst } \text { Last Last }}$ | ${ }_{4}^{43657 \text { first } \text { Last } \text { ast }}$ |  | ${ }_{5}^{536}$ F First L Last |
| 118 First last | 138 First last | 218 First Last | 238 First last | 318 first Last | 3388 first ast | 418 First Last | 438 First lst | 518 First last | 538 First Last |
| 119 First last | 139 First Last | 219 First Last | 239 Fisst last | 319 First Last | 3339 First Last | 419 First Last | 4399 irst last | 519 Fisst last | 539 First Last |
| 120 Fists Last | 140 First Last | 220 Fisst Last | 240 Fisst last | 320 First Last | 340First Last | 420 First Last | 440First Last | 520Fisist last | 540 First Last |

# Stretching Exarcises 

## Using Student Numbers:

Lining up
\# Have them line up by number.
\# Vary the procedure by having them line up by date. Example: Today is the 12th. That means that student number 12 will be at the head of the line. Numbers 1 through 11 will line up behind student number 31.

## Lining Up After Recess, pages 29-30, Tools \& Toys

Physical Education
\# Use numbers for choosing teams.
$>$ odds vs evens
$>1-16$ vs 17-31
\# When I begin working with the sixth grade students at my school for the annual Teacher/Sixth Grade softball game, the first step I take as coach of the sixth grade team is to assign them numbers for batting order. This eliminates the mad rush to be first in line behind the backstop. Order reigns supreme.
"Number order, please."
\# Have the students get into numerical order to verify that everyone is present. This technique is especially helpful during field trips or disaster drills

## Using a Check Off List:



Alternatives to paper
$\checkmark$ numbered clothespins and box
$\checkmark$ golf tees and a numbered pegboard

## Clothespin Checker, page 92, Tools \& Toys

## Combination classes (see sample to the right)

$\checkmark$ On your blackline master, make a small dot in front of the numbers of the students who are in the same grade. Don't dot the numbers of the students who are in the other grade. (Thanks to Tracy Petti; combo teacher.)

Mini-COL's for small group collection
$\checkmark$ Make a Check Off List that shows just the numbers of the students in a reading group and you'll be able to target just those students for specific assignments.


## Maintaining Aphabetical Order

You can't. So try not to worry about it. The student number system is really quite flexible.
When a student transfers out, you and the students won't be dealing with that student number. Your collectors and collators will understand. Adjustments will be made.

New student enrolls? Assign to him the unused student number.
New student enrolls and there are no gaps? Simply add the new student to the bottom of list. And although your carely crafted alphabetical order will be a bit off, online grading will still be bearable due to the Online Score Sheet you can download from my website.
http://newmanagement.com/downloads/olss.html
Let me show you what I mean.

## Bingo, Bango, Bongo!

The ability to record scores according to student numbers is a huge time saver. After an assignment has been submitted by students, their papers are collated according to student numbers. This causes the stack of papers to align with the score entry sheets you'll find in this handout.

The top paper on the stack will belong to Student Number 1. His score will go in space number 1 on a score entry form. Working your way through the stack as you work your way down the form makes the entry process extremely efficient.

Sadly, though, online grade programs always sort students by the alphabetical order of their last names.

Bingo, Bango, Bongo, though, will facilitate both tasks. Scores can be entered according to student numbers. And then, with just the click of a sort button, the OLSS will organize your students by their last names. A printout of the sorted score sheet will provide you with scores arranged so that they're aligned with your online grade program.

## Bonus Pages

In addition to the OLSS, you also find a Check OffList, two Check Off Sheets, and three Grade Sheets. [The first names of the students will automatically appear on the COL while first and last names will appear on all three versions of the grade sheet.]

| SN | FirstName | lastName | l | Score |
| :---: | :--- | :--- | :---: | :---: |
| 11 | Grant | SN2 |  |  |
| 1 | Ahmed | Chinnarath | 82 | 11 |
| 6 | Chris | Core | 94 | 1 |
| 15 | John | Dinubilo | 83 | 6 |
| 22 | Michele | Dolan | 97 | 15 |
| 12 | Hannah | Evans | 90 | 22 |
| 21 | Mary | Farris | 82 | 12 |
| 26 | Rodney | Hale | 98 | 21 |
| 19 | Makio | James | 79 | 26 |
| 13 | Isiah | Johnson | 81 | 19 |
| 4 | Ben | Keyes | 71 | 13 |
| 30 | Youssef | Khalifa | 68 | 4 |
| 5 | Chase | Klein | 46 | 30 |
| 16 | Jordan | Marcoff | 93 | 5 |
| 2 | Alex | Martin | 59 | 16 |
| 17 | Katrina | McNeal | 78 | 2 |
| 24 | Oleksander | Mishchenko | 66 | 17 |
| 14 | Jeffrey | Normand | 74 | 24 |
| 8 | David | Olson | 40 | 14 |
| 29 | Wesley | Patridge | 91 | 8 |
| 25 | Randall | Quinell | 88 | 29 |
| 27 | Scott | Ragland | 79 | 25 |

...... https://newmanagement.com/downloads/olss.html

# The Check Off List 




Related Tool...Blackline Marker, page 3


## What to do:

1. Add a header of some type.
2. Xerox 20 or 30 copies.
3. Cut 'em in half.
4. Put your new COL's in easy-to-get-to locations.
5. Grab one and label it.
6. Start collecting stuff.

## Sequoia Elementary School

Room Twelve
Third Grade Mr. Morris

FEDERAL SURVEY CARD


## Using A Check Off List

## Federal Survey Card (Collected by teacher)

1. Pass out survey cards.
2. Explain completion procedure .
3. Label Check Off List. (See sample page 6.)
4. Indicate absent students with a triangle
5. Clip Check Off List to any extra cards.

6. Set aside.
7. Remind students at the end of the day to return their cards.
8. Collect survey cards and mark off student numbers the next day.
9. Keep returned cards clipped to COL.
10. Reinforce expectations by "reminding" those who have not complied that you are in need of their cards.
11. Keep collecting and marking until you have them all.

Today Folder, page 16, Tools \& Toys
Red Basket, page 17, Tools \& Toys
Reward Tube, pages 34-35, Tools \& Toys

## Field Trip Permission Slips (Collected by student)

1. Give a COL and a large manila envelope to a student (Calvin.)
2. Direct the others to give their completed permission slips to Calvin.
3. Calvin marks his COL just the way you mark it when you use one.
4. Check with Calvin every few days or so to see how he's doing.
5. Have Calvin track down any stragglers.
6. When all forms have been collected, have Calvin take them to the office.

Clip 'Em, Danno, page 70, Tools \& Toys
Manila Envelope Check Off List, page 72, Tools \& Toys

## Book Reports (Honor System)

1. Announce in the morning that one of their assignments is due later in the day.
2. Fill out assignment header, triangle absent students, and attach COL to a folder.
3. Place folder in a handy location.
4. Students then turn in their assignments as they finish.

Return to Sender, page 7, Tools \& Toys
Neon Necklace, page 33, Tools \& Toys

| ASSIGNMENT: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Mon <br> 1 | Tue |  | Wed | Thur | Fri | ri |  | DUE BY |  |  |  |
|  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 |


| ASSIGNMENT: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Mon <br> 1 | Tue |  | Wed | Thur | Fri |  |  | DUE BY |  |  |  |
|  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 |


| ASSIGNMENT: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Mon |  |  | Wed | Thur | Fri |  |  | DUE |  |  |  |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 |

The Check Off Sheet is similar in use to the Check Off List. The motivation for making it came from having to deal with Daily Oral Language.

We used to put out a new COL each day. By putting five "mini-Check OffLists" on one sheet of paper, we had an improved tool for dealing with all five assignments during the week.

## Progress!



| ASSIGNMENT: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Mon | Tue | Wed | Thur | Fri |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |  |  |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |  |  |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 |  |  |

Although the Check Off Sheet that we used for Daily Oral Language (right) shows the spaces being assigned a specific day of the week, the blackline master is generic enough to be used as needed.

All you have to do is circle the day you are using it and then write the actual date on the blank line after Fri. (The sample that is shown on page 9 for handling math assignments demonstrates this technique.)


## Using a Check Offi Sheet

As you can see by the example on the previous page, the Check Off Sheet works just like a Check Off List. You label the section with the appropriate assignment/time due information and then allow your students to use it when turning in their assignments. The sheet, though, has an added advantage: it allows for tracking and documentation of individual students in specific subjects.


MATH

Looking at the Math COS above, you can see that by the third assignment for this group of students, Marshall, student \#19, is in need of some intervention. He turned in nothing on Monday and Tuesday; therefore, I should see him ASAP on Friday. I might not have been alerted to this situation if I had used a Check OffList to collect Monday's assignment and then a separate Check OffList to collect Tuesday's.

ASSIGNMENT:

| Mon | Tue | Wed |  | Thur | Fri |  |  | DUE BY |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 |


| ASSIGNMENT: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Mon 1 | Tue |  | Wed | Thur | Fri | ri |  | DUE BY |  |  |  |
|  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 |

ASSIGNMENT:

| Mon | Tue |  | Wed | Thur | Fri |  |  | DUE BY |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 |

ASSIGNMENT:

| Mon | Tue | Wed |  | Thur | Fri |  |  | DUE BY |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 |

## ASSIGNMENT:

| Mon | Tue | Wed |  | Thur | Fri |  |  | DUE BY |  |  |  |
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Photo by BOB GRIESER / Los Angeles Times
Sequoia Elementary sixth-graders have written a book for teachers, with the help of their instructor, Rick Morris, above.

## Psst! Some Insider Information

- Education: Some sixthgraders have written a book for teachers, after battle-testing what methods help them do better in school.


## By DAVID SMOLLAR

times staff writer
SAN DIEGO-The next time teachers scour the literature for ways to help their students learn, they might want to pick up a new book written by students for teachers.

If they do, they'll find out about Starburst Math, about the Rainbow Handwriting Award, about Max and E. T., the Minute of Silence, and a host of other tricks, activities, and strategies that the students "battle-tested"-with the result that they study more and enjoy education more.

The book, "School Our Way," is a product of teacher Rick Morris's sixth-grade class at Sequoia Elementary School in Clairemont and will be on sale for $\$ 3$ this week at the annual Mentor Teachers Conference in downtown San Diego.

In its introduction, the class says its illustrated guide is chock-full of " 20 terrific techniques for a happier, more productive class."

As part of a two-month writing project, the students picked their favorites from the many ideas that Morris uses to create a more exciting class. Those ideas are geared toward involving students in routine teacher chores as well as stimulating them to go beyond the rote recitation still common in many schools.

Not many classrooms, for example, feature "Educational Reserve Notes" in the form of paper money-with Morris's picture smack in
the middle-which students receive for a chore well done or an answer well reasoned. The "notes" are redeemable in a student-run classroom store for snacks and supplies.

Nor do most classes have a "Come-and-Get-It-Chuck-Wagon" musical triangle that students clang anytime a peer is reading aloud with too little expression.

Morris, well known among county educators for the enthusiasm and creativity he brings to teaching, has long wanted to write a book about all the classroom management techniques he has cooked up for children over the years and presented at teacher training seminars.
"Why not have the students do it?" Morris asked. "After all, they can tell you what really works and what doesn't."
The book's selections include the simple, such as "Max," the name given to the class digital timer they use instead of the classroom clocks, which are broken most of the time.

Then there's Starburst Math, named after the popular candy. The teacher dons a white lab coat with a fistful of Starburst squares in the right pocket and a name tag on the lapel-except that in place of a name, there's a math problem drawn in bright colors.
The teacher, transformed into Dr. Starburst," solicits students to come up with an answer to gain a candy reward.
The book even promotes "Classroom Clean-Up."Student Richard Padilla explains: "There's a jar full of jobs written on paper that are handed out randomly and which we have three minutes to do...it's our way of helping out the custodian."
Morris is a legend among Sequoia students for his energy, excitement, and caring at-titude-and fifth grade students routinely pray to be assigned to his classroom the following year, students Gabe Legaspi and

Sergio Enriquez said.
"He's firm, but he doesn't ever raise his voice," student Mario Vasquez said. Mike Fisher added, "We learn a lot of stuff without just using our books."

Morris used the book-writing project to push creative thinking, writing, cooperative learning, and art into one integrated learning project.
"Early on I picked 'Max' as an example for students to think about how to describe," Morris said. "We talked about it for a while, then I gave everyone twenty minutes to write down their thoughts."

Morris took home the papers, made notes for the students, and solicited a student editor who had turned in a colorful description for that article. That student was paired with a classmate to look over all the papers and come up with a final version.
"Overachiever, underachiever, it doesn't matter," Morris said. "The key is to get kids involved, to give them power in a positive way."
Morris had the final product copyrighted by the district and printed using his own desktop publishing system.

For Morris, the only real surprise came in looking over some of the students' selections, such as "Clay Sculpting." It's an idea that's new this year to mesh art, listening skills, and creativity. While students work with modeling clay in the afternoon, Morris reads aloud from a novel.

Morris wasn't sure how it would go over. The class, though, embraced it.
"The purpose is to see how creative you can be as you listen to a story," students wrote. "After we are finished, we walk around the room to see what other students have created."

Morris said,"That inclusion was great because it shows that students really can pick up on the fun of learning."

## Glasser's Five Basic Student Needs

New Management strategies are designed to meet the five basic student needs Bill Glasser identified in his book, The Quality School Teacher. By meeting these needs in a fair, firm, and consistent way, you'll be creating an environment that promotes the number one ingredient for effective education: a high-quality teacher/student relationship. (Peart \& Campbell, 1999)


## Core Principles

(From the book, Eight Great Ideas: Simple Ways to Transform Your Teaching)
I've been sharing teaching strategies for over twenty years at schools and districts around the country. It wasn't until recently, though, that I came up with what I call Core Principles of effective teaching. So far I've identified six of them. And the more I've shared these six principles with teachers, the more convinced I've become that they are vital to our overall success and effectiveness.

1. You have safe relationships with your students.

Strive to maintain a "slow to speak, slow to anger" style of interaction.
2. Your words equal your actions.

Students may doubt what you say but will always believe what you do. ${ }^{+}$
3. You are fair, firm, and consistent.

Develop strategies and procedures that manifest these three traits.
4. You can focus your attention.

Don't speak to everyone about the actions of a few.
5. Your classroom is manageable for you and your students.

Break things down into simple, easy-to-accomplish steps.

6. Your students are problem solvers.

The ability to solve problems is a life-long gift you can give to your students.

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[^0]:    $\dagger$ According to the research, $95 \%$ of independent student activity is left-brain dominant. Thus, as they work on an activity, their left-brains are not receptive to left-brain inputs such as spoken words. During this time, though, the doorway to the right-brain will be wide open.

[^1]:    $\dagger$ A must-read: Setting Limits in the Classroom by Robert MacKenzie. (Check out half.com for a great price.)

