

Title of Session: Teachers In Training

Moderator: Dianne Allen

Title of File: 20070913tntraining

Date: September 13, 2007

Room: Teachers In Training Group

DianneA: Welcome to today's Teachers-in-Training

DianneA: let's start off with some introductions ...

DianneA: where are you from and what is your key teaching area, interest?

DianneA: I am from Wollongong NSW Australia, and my teaching area of interest is now professional development

MariadungT: I'm from Houston and my key teaching area is elementary prek-2

BJB2: I teach communication in Pennsylvania and am on Tapped In helpdesk...Mariadung, you might want to go to the Actions menu in the top right of the chat and click on DETACH

MaryannDu: I am in Chicago, and I am a program evaluator interested in all sorts of programs and assessment

BJB2 . o O (makes it easier to read your chat)

MariadungT: oh, thanks for the tip bj

DavidW: I work mostly with teachers helping them learn more about educational technology. I'm in New Jersey, near New York City

DianneA: Thanks BJ

DianneA: for the detach tip

DianneA: Thanks Maria, Bj, David, Maryann for the intros

SherylM: I am from Erie, KS, and I provide professional development and have taught for 30 years or so. I am a parent of a high school sophomore

DianneA: Thanks Sheryl

SherylM smiles

DianneA: Now Mariadung, what we usually do here in Teachers-in-Training ..

DianneA: is provide a forum for peer sharing, and practicum troubleshooting ...

MariadungT: sounds good

DianneA: and whatever is on the mind of the pre-service teachers who turn up for the peer session

DianneA: so tell me what stage in pre-service training are you?

MariadungT: I'm a student teacher

DianneA: no I need more detail than that ...

DianneA: have you been doing any practicum, and lately

MariadungT: oh sorry. no

DianneA: and when do you expect to next be in the classroom teaching?

MariadungT: I am currently teaching in a 2nd grade classroom for one semester

DianneA: right .. and what for you is the highlight of this current experience?

MariadungT: I think the whole experience in itself...

DianneA: is this your first time of teaching in a class room?

MariadungT: interacting with students, learning routines, developing lessons

MaryannDu: lol I would have to I can relate to that!

DianneA nods to Maryann

MariadungT: no, last semester I taught but not everyday

DianneA: I am anticipating going back to a new class next week and I am trying to sus out what is expected to go on before I get there

MaryannDu: how long will you be in that class Dianne

DianneA: have you anything that you would like to raise with us today Mariadung, where talking about it might prove helpful for you?

DianneA: The session Maryann is a two day professional development

seminar/workshop

DianneA: and I have been asked to observe to see if I can suggest ways of helping undertake 'paradigm shifts'!!

MaryannDu: ohhh

MariadungT: I have some trouble in classroom management (gaining attention). any tips?

DianneA: what is your usual first step to gain attention Mariadung?

MariadungT: To speak louder

DavidW smiles

DianneA nods

DavidW . o O (I've done that)

DianneA: now let me ask the question in a quite different way ...

SherylM smiles and nods

DianneA: when you were last in a classroom, as a learner, and were aware that the teacher needed your attention, how did you notice that?

MaryannDu: and look fierce!!! lololol

MariadungT: she basically yelled

DianneA: OK, everyone, for Mariadung's benefit ... what have you noticed as learners as the ways teachers can get your attention, other than loud noises

DianneA doesn't forget her crowd management tool, a lary coloured hooter; works a treat!

MaryannDu: well, that was a great question to ask, and I started thinking. that for one thing it was hard to tell when the teacher didn't need our attention. so trying to figure out when they were getting out attention specifically, required something different - yelling. lights, etc

MariadungT: I'm sorry. there's more. I'm trying to remember...turning lights on/off, clapping beats

SherylM: movement is always a valuable tool; it breaks their concentration on what they

are doing and gets them to focus on you

BJB2 wonders what a lary coloured hooter is?

MaryannDu: I used to have a tiny bell, you hit and it dinged. and when I need my student's attention I dinged the bell and they froze, where they were, whatever they were doing.

DianneA: a lary coloured hooter is a bicycle attachment in fluorescent red, and makes a very funny noise, loudly

SherylM: If you walk to another part of the room, or to the center; There are lots of great ideas in The First Day of School.

MaryannDu: sometimes I just had to say, one sec for the noise level to go down, thanks, and ding the bell and everyone unfroze

BJB2: raising your hand and showing a pre-arranged signal also works...like two fingers up in a Victory sign

MaryannDu: or if it was time to wrap up, ding. we have ten minutes start ...

SherylM: yes, all techniques must focus on attention getting behaviors that are pleasant but effective

DianneA: so we have certain signals, and class rules to go with that signal

SherylM: yes

MaryannDu: I like the freezing in place, because it was fast, and everyone got it right now, and it was fun.

MariadungT: thanks. these all sound like great ideas. I will try them out

DianneA remembers hands on heads and silence routine

SherylM: I have even had kids stand up to get them focused; then get them to stretch....etc

DianneA: great one Sheryl ...

MaryannDu: part of it I think is helping the students realize that they do not need to focus on you every sec, but that sometimes everyone needs to pay attention

DianneA: helps to do some other things as well

DianneA: has any one tried using something musical ... and again to break the pattern?

MaryannDu: with pre schoolers.

DianneA: can you elaborate Maryann, please?

MaryannDu: I have used the bell, up to 9th grade

BJB2: a specific song on a keyboard or piano can work with the little ones

SherylM: yes, when I taught Kindergarteners, I would start a song and let them pick it up

MaryannDu: well they are like herding cats, so we would play music softly and begin talking about cleaning up, or getting ready to go outside, etc. and used the music to sing as we did this and focus the attention on moving forward.

MaryannDu: yes, like Sheryl did also.

SherylM: I also taught the kids to develop mental imagery....like floating on a cloud

SherylM: Can you do that now?

MaryannDu: oh yes. I remember once a teacher had the kids all bubbles, and they floated, but wouldn't sit for lunch until she popped each one

DianneA: Mariadung, if I wanted to get your attention, what would be the best way of doing that?

MaryannDu: also I have used class monitors who help me

SherylM: I like that

MariadungT: with a signal I suppose

SherylM: the bubble thing

DianneA: what kind of a signal?

SherylM: I had a cricket clicker for 6th graders

MariadungT: most likely an auditory signal

DianneA: what signal would be most attention getting for you, that was silent?

MaryannDu: I would need auditory. I would never pay attention to a silent one. just wouldn't see it.

MariadungT: probably switching the lights

DianneA: not even a fierce look Maryann?

SherylM: The absence of noise is also auditory

MaryannDu: that I would for sure ignore!!!lolol

DianneA nods to Sheryl, point taken!!!

MaryannDu: yes good point

MariadungT: I agree with Sheryl. absolute silence would get my attention

DianneA: so with younger children, some sort of signal and a routine that requires quietening and focusing

MaryannDu: also I think that there are different reasons for getting attention. and that may guide us. like we need to hear this and be ready. might need lights, very basic instructions and time frame.

DianneA: I have seen some teachers start the day with a meditation routine like Sheryl mentioned .. and then use it time and again during the day when needed ...

MaryannDu: but moving from one major activity to another may need something else

DianneA: and as much for the teacher as for the class

MaryannDu: lol yes

DianneA: and because the teacher is doing it, the children learn to do it, and benefit from it

MaryannDu: I think that the silence is good. walking around the room, saying in 5 minutes we start... then something that notes time... this way I think that the children also know that in this space they can stand up, move, stretch, etc. a buffer

SherylM: here is a description of that book, The First Day of School by Harry Wong <http://urltea.com/1hd7>

MaryannDu: thanks

DianneA: One thing that I also think is important about whatever special routine you develop for getting attention Mariadung, is that it needs to express something important about you

MaryannDu: yes

MariadungT: thanks. that book sounds familiar

DianneA: Thanks Sheryl

SherylM: I wish I had seen it when I was a new teacher, but it was still very helpful when our principal got one for every team at our school

MariadungT: good point

MaryannDu: and that the kids get and are not burnt out on from other teachers. or on the reverse, that they really liked

DianneA: Mariadung, are you in the classroom before the children arrive?

SherylM: you can also think about what your favorite teachers and your parents did that positively got your attention....you don't have to reinvent the wheel

MariadungT: yes I am

DianneA notes that she really has no idea how a typical class operates in the US

MaryannDu: I think that the more we feel we are in control, that the more we also project respect from the kids. in terms of being ready, and being friendly, and so on.

DianneA: and do you know exactly what you want to do with children when the class is to happen?

DianneA nods to Sheryl ... that is what I am trying to explore .. some of the variety that is possible

DianneA: and some of the other operations that are just as successful as others

MariadungT: yes, it's just that sometimes I feel like I lose control of the classroom because the noise levels get too high and they began talking all at once

DianneA nods to Mariadung

DianneA: maybe that is 'good attention' and 'engagement'

MariadungT: yes, if they are discussing the topic

DianneA: do you start the day with some basic courtesy welcome?

MariadungT: yes. I meet the children at the door and give each of them hi-fives

DianneA: so it is good to give them good feedback about their involvement while asking them to dampen down the noise out of courtesy to others

SherylM: so maybe quiet high fives?

DianneA: so a signal of a high five might be your signal

MariadungT) I'll try that. thanks!

MaryannDu: I think that whatever you pick, it is important to practice it.

DianneA nods to Maryann

DianneA: and get the children to do it as a learning, play, activity

MaryannDu: yes

DianneA: and talk about why you do it

DianneA: and talk about what happens when they respond in the right way to it

DianneA: and build some lessons around high fives

DianneA: doing to one another

MariadungT: I definitely will practice it. I love all of your suggestions and ideas

DianneA: how many high fives make 50?

DianneA: how many high fives in the room now?

DianneA: what other signals do people use to get others' attention?

DianneA: why might we need to use signals?

SherylM: yes, those kind of activities help them focus on you and the work of school

MaryannDu: you can also vary it. say the kids are outside, and you want them to come in. you give a high five to one, they pass it on and line up, and each kid keeps passing and lining up

SherylM nods

DianneA nods to Maryann!

MariadungT: that's a good one!

DianneA: One of the things I like about teaching is how much it tests our imagination

MaryannDu: I think too that time management is a team tool and it helps them pace their work, and see that the things we do need to keep moving on.

DianneA: can you elaborate a bit more please Maryann ...

DianneA: how does that look in your class?

MaryannDu: well, I like to think that the focus is totally on the student and that I really don't need to be there except to facilitate and occasionally teach!

MaryannDu: so for me, it is a way of moving activities along

MaryannDu: and also for noting important events like learning a new something

MaryannDu: but for me the focus is on kids moving through their daily space and feeling like they have done many things

DianneA: so you use your class monitors as part of your team?

MaryannDu: during a day, that they accomplished them and that I guided the process

MaryannDu: yes,

DianneA: is the idea to eventually build the whole class as THE TEAM?

MaryannDu: maybe to be aware of finished work and picking it up as kids are doing something to turn in, or to quietly go around the room and see where people are on work

MaryannDu: yes, team is the key to me

MaryannDu: they might say, everyone is done early, and I would say. ok go ahead and get us ready for the next whatever.

MariadungT: absolutely. I like to think of my classroom as an extended family

MaryannDu: yes,

MaryannDu: and also when I use the class as the team, I am able to give one on one to others.

DianneA notes that how we 'see' our classes, what we are calling them out to be, will

affect how they respond as a group

MaryannDu: yes

MaryannDu: that is a very good point

MaryannDu: there are always boundaries, of course, but kids are very strong and want to be engaged

DianneA: well Mariadung, thanks for sharing with us your current class situation, and making us think a bit more about what we do and why ...

DianneA: is there any one last thing others would like to share? as a tip?

MaryannDu: monitors of course change all the time, some times with older grades, they take on the role and assignments by them selves

MariadungT: thank you all for sharing your ideas and suggestions. I will definitely use them

MaryannDu: have fun!

MaryannDu: we learn more when we are happy

DianneA: thanks Maryann, we certainly do

SherylM: you don't have to be perfect; when things go differently than you want them to just take a few cleansing breaths before you act.

DianneA nods to Sheryl, a very helpful tip

DianneA: think about the family song you want them to learn, and teach it to them Mariadung

MariadungT: ok. I will

DianneA: and build high fives into it

MariadungT) yes. that's what I was thinking about

DianneA: good student then!!!

DianneA hands out the gold stars

DianneA: thanks all for the company ... see you next time maybe?

MaryannDu: bye, thanks so much.

DianneA: thanks again

DavidW: Thanks, Dianne

BJB2: next Teachers in Training is October 11

DianneA: thanks BJ

MariadungT: bye! thanks so much! I really appreciate it

BJB2: bring your colleagues, Mariadung ;-)

DavidW: Good luck, Mariadung

BJB2: thanks, Dianne

MariadungT: thanks everyone