

Table of Contents

About the Author	v
Acknowledgements	vii
Introduction	xiii
1 Why Look at Great?	1
Studying Effective Teachers	4
2 It's People, Not Programs	7
It's People, Not Programs	9
How Open Classrooms Got Started	10
Assertive Discipline—the Problem or the Solution?	11
It's Not What You Do, It's How You Do It	13
The Poor Lecturer's Classroom.	13
3 The Power of Expectations	15
Expectations	17
Rules.	18
Stop the Thumping!	18
Consequences	19
Set Expectations at the Start of the Year	19
We Are Still Undefeated.	20
4 Prevention Versus Revenge.	21
When a Student Misbehaves	23
Sending Students to the Office	24
"Nuthin' Happened"	24
A Teacher's Bag of Tricks	25
Respect Your Students, Their Parents—and Yourself	27
Twenty-Four Students on the Side of the Teacher	28
Restoring Trust	28
5 High Expectations—for Whom?	31
Are High Expectations Important?.	33
6 Who Is the Variable?.	35
Who Is the Variable in the Classroom?	37

	What If the Students Do Poorly?	37
	How Do We Deal With the Demands of Others?	39
7	Ten Days out of Ten	43
	We Never Forget That One Time	45
	You Do Not Have to Like the Students	46
	The Power of Praise	46
	Five Things That Help Praise Work	46
	Too Much Nice	51
8	The Teacher Is the Filter	53
	How Is Your Day Going?	55
	The Angry Parent	55
	When the Teacher Sneezes	56
	One Goal, Every Day	57
	Where the Elite Meet?	57
	The World Outside School	58
	This Is the Worst Group of Kids We've Ever Had	59
	Perception Can Become Reality	59
9	Don't Need to Repair—Always Do Repair.	63
	Some <i>Never</i> Need to Repair—But <i>Always</i> Do	65
	Some <i>Always</i> Need to Repair—But <i>Never</i> Do	66
	I Am Sorry That Happened	67
	The Highway Patrol	68
10	Ability to Ignore	73
	Hey, Pretzel Face!	75
	Ignoring Minor Errors	76
	Handling the High Achievers	78
11	Random or Plandom?	81
	Why Does Jimmy Always Pick Billy?	83
	The All-school Assembly	84
	The Faculty Meeting	84
12	Base Every Decision on the Best People	87
	Shoplifters Will Be Prosecuted!	90
	This Means You!	90
	What Will My Best Students Think?	91
	My Best Students "Will Be Fine" No Matter What	93
	The Teacher's Pet	93

13 In Every Situation, Ask Who Is Most Comfortable and Who Is Least Comfortable.	95
Treat Everyone As If They Were Good	97
Uncomfortable Feelings Make People Change—One Way or Another	100
Pay for Performance	101
14 What About These Darn Standardized Tests? .	105
Without Success, Tests Become the School	107
Raise Those Test Scores!	110
Effective Teachers Keep Testing in Perspective	111
So, You Want to Improve Your Reading Scores?	112
15 Make It Cool to Care	113
Make It Cool to Care	115
The Great Teacher	116
Merry Christmas, Everyone!	117
Who Are the Legends?	119
Touch the Heart, Then Teach the Child	120
16 Clarifying Your Core	123
Fourteen Things That Matter Most	127
References	129

We often hear that we can learn from anyone. From effective people, we learn what to do; from ineffective people, we learn what *not* to do. Although this advice contains a grain of truth, think about it: How much can we really learn from our ineffective colleagues about being an effective teacher or leader? We already know plenty about what *not* to do. Good teachers already know not to use sarcasm, not to yell at kids, not to argue with teens in front of their friends. We don't need to visit an ineffective teacher's classroom to learn this. But we can always reap good ideas from successful educators.

Look at it another way: If teaching were a true/false test, we could raise our scores by looking over the shoulder of an unsuccessful colleague and choosing the opposite answer to each question. However, working with students is never as simple as yes or no, bad or good, true or false. Teaching is more like an open-ended essay exam. It won't help much to copy from the least prepared test taker; we already know that doodling in the margins or writing "Vicky-4-Ever" won't earn points. On the other hand, although we might not agree with everything in the best essay, we could still learn from it. At the very least, we would probably see some new ideas that we could build on. As educators, we face a myriad of choices; eliminating the inappropriate options doesn't move us forward.

Here's one more example: Imagine that you have decided to build a rocket and fly to the moon. Now imagine that you have two choices about learning how to do this: You can go to NASA, or you can come by my house on a Sunday afternoon. Well, if you choose the second option, even the most diligent observation is unlikely to advance your lunar mission. Take all the notes you want: Leaning back in the recliner doesn't in-

Teachers are the filters for the day-to-day reality of school. Whether we are aware of it or not, our behavior sets the tone. If students overhear us whining or complaining about something, it may be the talk of the school for days even if it was something minor. By the same token, if we always approach things in a positive manner, then this is what the students reflect. The most effective educators understand this and choose their filters carefully.

How Is Your Day Going?

As educators, we hear this question many times a day. Our response not only influences how others view us, but also affects the frame of mind of the person who asked. What's more, we have choices about how to respond.

You can smile at a fellow teacher and say, "Things are great! How about with you?" Or you can respond, "That Jimmy Wallace is getting on my nerves!"—and all of a sudden Jimmy Wallace is getting on that teacher's nerves too (whether the teacher knows him or not).

You may be thinking that you could not do this because you would never lie. Hmm: So when the second graders ask if you like the mural they drew, what do you tell them? How do you answer the question, "Honey, do these pants make me look fat?" Again, it is always up to us to determine what gets through our filters and what does not.

The Angry Parent

Here's one scenario, filtered two ways. Let's examine what happens under each. Say I'm a homeroom teacher, meet-